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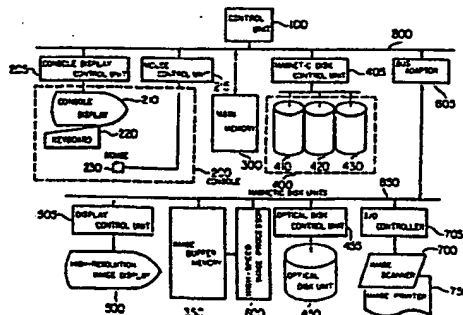
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⑤4 System for information storage and retrieval.

of desired information in facilitated and simplified manner. The relations stored internally of the computer are classified into «generic relationship» and «instance relation» representing individual facts, whereby generic framework of facts can be stored. The framework can be applied to concrete concepts through inheritance mechanism. The generic framework is displayed upon interaction with the user for allowing new information to be inputted and desired information to be retrieved in a facilitated and simplified manner. Retrieval by using semantic retrieval formula created internally through dialogical procedure is realized through inferring processing.



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SYSTEM FOR INFORMATION STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an information storage and retrieval system which permits storage,
5 retrieval and display of such information as documents, drawings, photographs and the like in such a manner in which common users can easily manipulate the system for the storage and/or retrieval of information.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

10 Heretofore, management of a data base which permits storage and retrieval of an enormous amount of information has been relied on those skilled in the art. The information is available to the end user only through the medium of experts. However, in accompaniment to the
15 development of small size storage device of a large capacity such as optical disk, there are realized document filing systems for office use which can be directly manipulated by the end users. Further, word processors increasingly come into wide use. Under the circumstances,
20 there is an increasing tendency that a large amount of documents are stored in electronic devices.

Heretofore, the items such as documents are managed in tabular form listing bibliographic data such as identification names, titles and author's names attached to
25 the documents, while attempt is made to facilitate the

1 retrieval of information by assigning keywords or
classification codes thereto. Nevertheless, there arise
problems mentioned below.

In most of the computer file systems, the file
5 management is performed with the aid of identification
names (each composed of ca. 20 characters). However,
difficulty is often encountered in naming the document or
file so that it can be readily recalled. Besides, searching
the file on the basis of the character string which
10 constitutes the name while inferring the contents from the
name is an extremely difficult job even for the user who
has prepared the name himself.

Since the bibliographic data are objective items,
registration thereof can be easily made. However, there
15 scarcely arises the situation in which the bibliographic
data are made use of as means for retrieval. Utilization
of the bibliographic data as the aid for the retrieval is
restricted to the rare case in which the document to be
retrieved is clearly known to the user as the source or
20 reference literature.

In most cases of the retrieval of documents, the
title ambiguously memorized by user or the contents thereof
provides a clue for the retrieval. To this end, keywords
and classification codes are employed. However, difficulty
25 is encountered already in assigning the keywords or
classification codes to the documents upon registration
thereof. In other words, it is difficult to determine the
keyword which make it possible to retrieve properly the

1 associated document later on. By way of example, it is
assumed that many keywords are attached to a document so
that it can be retrieved, as viewed from the various angles.
This however means that a number of keywords which are
5 useless for retrieval are employed. If the number of the
keywords is decreased, uncertainty arises as to about the
correct selection for retrieval. In the data base for
literatures, preparation and allocation of the keywords
have heretofore been relied on those skilled in the art.

10 Moreover, difficulty is often encountered in
recalling the keyword itself. By way of example, upon
preparation of the retrieval formula composed of the key-
words for the retrieval of document, literatures having
a resemblance to the desired one are searched out from a
15 general list for picking up their keywords, which are
then referred to for determining the keywords possibly
allocated to the desired document. Such procedure is
not rare and tells how difficult it is to recall the
keyword.

20 In the case of filing documents through
classification, ambiguousness of the taxonomic tree
(hierarcal tree) as well as confusion of the taxonomic trees
(i.e. multiple classifications of one document) provide
problem. Besides, standards for the classification vary in
25 the course of time lapse. A span of several years will make
the classification standards useless, giving rise to
another problem.

Under the circumstance, easy management and

- 1 retrieval of information for the user provide extremely
important problems remaining to be solved in the hitherto
known document filing system.

- As an attempt to cope with the above problems,
- 5 there has been proposed a method of diagraming the
retrieval conditions and deriving formal query formula for
the retrieval by using natural language, as disclosed in
J.F. Sowa's "Conceptual graphs for a Data Base Interface"
IBM J. Research and Development, Vol. 20, 1976, p.p. 336-357.
- 10 Furthermore, a method of assisting creation of the condi-
tional formula for retrieval by presenting knowledge
concerning the contents of a data base from computer is
known, as disclosed in F.N. Tou et al's "RABBIT : An
Intelligent Database Assistant", Proceedings of National
15 Conference of AAAI, 1982, p.p. 314-318. These methods are
intended only for assisting the retrieval from the data
base. No teachings are disclosed as to the assistance of
storage of information for the updating purpose.

- In the filing of documents by the end user,
- 20 registration of new document as well as maintenance of the
file system (e.g. reexamination as to pertinency of
classification) is important for realizing the facilitated
retrieval. The approaches mentioned above do not meet this
requirement.

- 25 Finally, the retrieval is accompanied by still
another problem. Namely, no measures are available for
re-examining the old information from the view point of a
new concept which has not yet been clearly difined at the

1 time the old information was stored or for retrieving
from the new point of view. By way of example, there often
occurs such case in which classification is to be modified
from the new viewpoint or in a manner specific to the user
5 himself after lapse of several years. In this way,
possibility of rearrangement of information as well as
alteration of retrieval also provide important factors for
enhancing the easy usability of the information storage and
retrieval system.

10 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the invention is to solve the problems mentioned above and provide an information-storage and retrieval system which allows the user to retrieve the desired document from ambiguous or vague and fragmentary
15 (partial) information in a facilitated and simplified manner while making it easy to enter or register documents and other information.

In view of the above and other objects which will be more apparent as description proceeds, there is provided
20 according to a general aspect of the invention an information storage system in which mechanism of storing information in the machine is so arranged as to compatible or comparable to the man's memorization mechanism and thinking process so that the end user can easily understand
25 manipulation of the system to thereby enhance the facilitated usability thereof.

More specifically, the invention contemplates to

1 make it possible to facilitate registration of new information and the inputting of conditions for retrieval, realizing semantically meaningful retrieval, and adapting the retrieval for diversity of viewpoints.

5 To this end, the system according to the invention is imparted with novel functions mentioned below:

(1) Supporting function for registration

For registration of new documents, it is necessary to input the subject matter and the nature or class thereof
10 in addition to the entry of the bibliographic items (author's name, title, the sources and others). Further in order to realize semantic retrieval, it is required to additionally provide more detailed or concrete information. By way of example, suppose that the subject matter is a computer.

15 Then, there may be required such information as "what kind of computer it is", "what characteristics it has", "what company has developed it", "where the company is located", "which country the location belongs to", and so forth.

When the information mentioned above is stored, it is
20 possible to retrieve with the aid of inference function "the document concerning a computer developed by a certain company located in a country A and having characteristic features B".

According to the teaching of the invention,
25 knowledge about the concepts "computer", "company" and others is stored in the storage system, wherein upon addition of new information, user is given instruction as to what kind of property data should be inputted through

1 dialogical procedure, so that he or she can input the data
within a short time without being accompanied with entry
of erroneous or false information.

In the case where information or similar property
5 has been already registered, such function is realized which
allows only the property differing from that of the above
information to be inputted without need for entering all
the property data of information to be newly inputted,
to thereby facilitate the inputting procedure. By way of
10 example, suppose a case in which a man named "John Smith"
has been already registered and his brother named
"Gorge Smith" is to be newly registered. In that case,
by selecting "John Smith" as a similar concept,--the system
displays a list of the properties of this concept, for
15 example, in a manner as follows:

(FATHER-IS "Davise Smith")

(MOTHER-IS "Samanser Smith")

(BIRTHDAY-IS "May 4, 1960")

(SEX-IS "male")

20 (HOBBY-IS "music") (1)

Then, the user can input the properties of the concept
"Jeorge Smith" that differ from the above, e.g. (BIRTHDAY-
IS "June 7, 1963") and (HOBBY-IS "sport").

(2) Supporting Function for retrieval condition input

25 When the end user is going to perform the retrieval
of a document, it is common that he or she has only an
ambiguous image or concept of the document and feels
difficulty in expressing it in the natural language.

1 According to the teaching of the present inven-
tion, the retrieval is started from the most important
concept and information is sequentially added through
dialogical procedure or interaction. To this end, the
5 knowledge of the world model conserving the content of
the filed documents is stored in the system as is the case
with the registration assistance function. On the
basis of the knowledge, the names of properties which
can be inputted and the concept (class of things) to which
10 the properties may belong are presented to the user.

By way of example, suppose that what the user
wants is "technical paper". Then, the user inputs
"technical paper". The system knows that "technical paper"
has properties such as "author", "title", "subject matter"
15 and others. Accordingly, the system displays on a terminal
CRT sets of names of such properties and concepts such as
(author, name), (title, text) and (subject, concept). The
user who observes the display in turn inputs the selected
data which the user memorizes as the relevant information.
20 For example, "subject" is selected and "computer" is
inputted. This process can be recursively repeated. In
the above example, when the "computer" is inputted as the
selected subject, the system in turn displays (DEVELOPED-BY
ORGANIZATION COMPANY), (RUNS COMPUTER-LANGUAGE), (RUNS-
25 UNDER OS) and others. In response thereto, the user will
input (RUNS LISP) as the additional condition for retrieval.

By virtue of the assistance function mentioned
above, there can be established the retrieval condition

1 as follows:

"Technical paper about computer in which LISP
runs and which is written by an employee of a company A"

.... (2)

5 As will be described in detail hereinafter, the
above retrieval condition is expressed in the formula or
expression as follows:

(TECHNICAL-PAPER

(SUBJECT-IS

10 (COMPUTER (RUNS LISP))

(AUTHOR-IS

(EMPLOYEE (WORDS-AT COMPANY A)))) (3)

The above expression is based on symbolic
expression (S-expression) in LISP Language (refer to P.H.
15 Winston "LISP" Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1981, p. 18).

(3) Semantic retrieval function

It is common that a user who wants to retrieve a
certain item has only fragmentary and ambiguous information
thereof. On the other hand, the computer memory (e.g. data
20 base) stores that item in a definitely concrete name. The
gap between the user's fragmentary information and the
precise data stored in the computer memory must be bridged.

In this connection, the ambiguity may be generally
classified into five varieties mentioned below:

25 (i) Incompleteness of name

Only a part of the name of an item or concept is
memorized.

(ii) Synonym

1 The same thing is often memorized or recalled in
terms of different words. By way of example, words
"artificial intelligence", "thinking machine", and "AI"
indicates the same concept.

5 (iii) Incompleteness of number

It is rare that a man remembers numerical values
precisely, as exemplified by "during the generation of
1980s", "about 1985", "from 1983 to 1987", "before 1960"
and so on.

10 (iv) Taxonomic conceptual abstraction - 1

Things and concepts are often memorized in terms
of concepts of higher rank with the concrete contents being
forgotten. Memorization of the concept of higher rank is
often based on the clustering, as exemplified by sayings
15 that "although the name of the company is forgotten, the
organization is neither university nor laboratory but a
company at any rate", "that was a certain electric machinery
manufacturer" or the like.

In this case, assuming that the electric machinery
20 manufacturer is "ABC Co., Ltd.", for example, the following
relations hold true.

("ABC Co., Ltd." IS-A ELECTRIC-MANUFACTURER)

(ELECTRIC-MANUFACTURER IS-A ENTERPRISE)

Schematically, the concepts "ABC Co., Ltd." and "ELECTRIC-
25 MANUFACTURER" are coupled by a link "IS-A". Herein, the
link "IS-A" represents a relationship defined between the
two concepts mentioned above and is referred to as the
subsumption relationship.

1 In general, it is believed that all the concepts
can be hierarchically classified by means of the link
"IS-A". The resulting hierachical tree is referred to as
concept tree or conceptual tree.

5 (v) Partomic conceptual abstraction - 2

 The abstraction discussed above is a sort of set
theoretical abstraction. It should be pointed out that
man often memorizes a thing in terms of upper rank part in
part-whole relation of a concept. For example, man says
10 that "although I can not remember the factory where Mr. A
works, I am sure that he is an employee of ABC Co., Ltd."
or "although I can not remember what the city is called,
I am sure that the city is located in the California state".

 In contrast, the data base stores the correspond-
15 ing facts in more definite manner such as "Mr. A works at
XYZ factory" or "ABC Co., Ltd., is located at LosAngeles".
Accordingly, the information stored in the data base can
not be retrieved starting from the ambiguous information
memorized in the user.

20 In this case, the following relation plays an
important role.

 ("ABC Co., Ltd." HAS-PART-OF "XYZ factory")

 {"California state" HAS-PART-OF "LosAngeles"}

what is important to be noted is not

25 ("LosAngeles" IS-A "California state")

but

 (LosAngeles IS-PART-OF "California state")

This relation should be clearly distinguished from the

1 subsumption relation described above. Parenthetically,
it should be mentioned that the relation "IS-PART-OF" is
a reverse relation of "HAS-PART-OF".

In more strict sense, the relation having
5 directivity such as "IS-PART-OF" and "HAS-PART-OF" is
referred to, simply as the relation, while the relation
having the directivity lost (and serving only as the link)
is referred to as the relationship. In the case of the
above example, the relations "IS-PART-OF" and "HAS-PART-OF"
10 are referred to as "part-whole relationship".

As to the man's memorization faculty or character-
istic, it may further be pointed out that relation between
the concepts is more susceptible to be memorized than the
concepts themselves. For example, in the case of retrieval
15 starting from such fragmentary ambiguous information that
"the subject matter of a certain article is an operating
system which was developed by an institute in U.S.A.",
the fact "developed" is important, and this fact represents
"relation" defined between the two concepts "operating
20 system" and "institute". In more concrete, retrieval
condition may be expressed as follows:

("UX OPERATING SYSTEM"

IS-DEVELOPED-BY

"INSTITUTE B")

25 wherein "IS-DEVELOPED-BY" represents the relation. In the
retrieval based on the ambiguous information, this
"relation" is important.

Among the characteristics of man's memorizing

1 faculty, the incompleteness of name and numerical values
are taken into consideration in the hitherto known informa-
tion retrieval. For example, there can be mentioned the
matching function of fragmentary (partial) character
5 string and designation of numerical range.

The semantic retrieval function according to the
invention is characterized above all by the conceptual
abstractions among the classified varieties described above.
More specifically, with the aid of the retrieval condition
10 input supporting function, the semantically ambiguous
retrieval is rendered possible, as follows:

Retrieval Condition: "Articel concerning a
computer developed by a
certain company located in
15 California state and in which
an operating system developed
by a certain institute
runs" (4)

In the above conditional statement, the concrete
20 concept is only "California state". Other words which may
possibly be used as keywords are "computer", "institute",
and "operating system". Through the hitherto known infor-
mation retrieval system, e.g. keyword retrieval system, any
satisfactory results of retrieval can not be obtained.

25 It is however noted that the conditional state-
ment (4) is considered as "semantic meaningful retrieval
condition" according to the invention, because the state-
ment (4) contains relations between "California state"

1 and "company", "company" and "computer", and "operating
system" and "computer", respectively, as the information
for retrieval. Further, in the sense that "company",
"computer", "operating system" are generic name (abstract
5 concepts), the so-called "abstract" retrieval is realized.
In contrast, in the case of the hitherto known retrieval
system, since the relations between keywords are not stated,
the above statement (4) may be erroneously interpreted
as "article about computer introduced by an institute
10 located in California state and in which operating system
developed by a certain company runs", which is of course
"semantically meaningless retrieval".

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a view showing a system arrangement
15 according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a view for illustrating a concept
network;

Fig. 3 is a view illustrating the concept network
in a schematic diagram;

20 Fig. 4 is a view showing a concept relation model
in a Entity-Relation diagram;

Figs. 5 to 8 are views illustrating concrete
examples of knowledge representation by the concept relation
model;

25 Fig. 9 is a view illustrating an example of image
data management;

Fig. 10 is a functional block diagram showing

1 software employed according to an embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 11 is a view for illustrating as a result of character substring matching procedure;

5 Fig. 12 is a view showing a menu;

Fig. 13 is a view for illustrating network traverse procedure based on selection from the menu;

Fig. 14 is a view showing a concept tree display;

10 Fig. 15 is a view showing a hierarcacal tree based on the part-whole relationship;

Fig. 16 is a view for illustrating network traverse procedure based on concept frames;

Fig. 17 is a view for illustrating method for definition and registration of new concept;

15 Fig. 18 is a view for illustrating concept network edition;

Figs. 19 to 22 are views for illustrating dialogical retrieval formula creating procedure;

20 Fig. 23 is a view for illustrating semantic retrieval;

Fig. 24 is a view for illustrating concept matching procedure; and

Fig. 25 is a view for illustrating functions for displaying concepts in tabular form.

25 DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In the following, the present invention will be described in detail in conjunction with the exemplary or

1 preferred embodiments thereof by referring to the accompanying drawings.

Fig. 1 shows a general arrangement of an image information filing system in which an information storage and retrieval system according to an exemplary embodiment of the invention is adopted. In the first place, structure and operation of the whole system will be outlined below.

Basically, the system is composed of a data processing portion and an image information processing portion. The data processing portion comprises a control unit (also referred to as CPU) 100, a main memory 300, magnetic disk units 400 and a terminal console 200 (which includes a CRT 210, a keyboard 220 and a mouse 230) and an image information processing portion. On the other hand, the image information processing portion comprises an image scanner 700, an image printer 750, an optical disk unit 450, an image buffer memory 350, a high-speed image processor (also referred to as IP) 600 and a high-resolution image display (also referred to as CRT) 500. The data processing portion and the image information processing portion are interconnected through a bus adapter 805.

As main operations to be performed, there can be mentioned registration of image information from documents, retrieval of desired information for display or other type of outputting thereof, and inputting and editing of information or data belonging to the field to be filed. In the registration of the image knowledge of document, the latter is scanned through the image scanner 700, wherein

1 the resulting image information is loaded in the image
buffer memory 350 and stored in the optical disk unit 450
after having been coded in a compressed form by the
high-speed image processor or IP 600. At that time, the
5 image information in the buffer memory 350 is displayed
on the image display or CRT 500 to check whether the image
information has been properly digitized, while bibliographic
data of the document (such as subject or title, author,
the source and others) as well as significance thereof in
10 the world knowledge are inputted through the terminal
console 200. The bibliographic data, physical addresses
(pack address, track address and sector address) of the
image information in concern on the optical disk-unit 450
and properties of the image (size, scan density, type of
15 coding as adopted and the like) are stored in the magnetic
disk unit or file unit 420. On the other hand, information
about the significance of the document in the world
knowledge and the like is stored in the file unit 430.

In the retrieval and display operation, the
20 desired document is identified with the aid of the terminal
console 200 through dialogical interacting process described
hereinafter to be thereby displayed on the image display CRT
500. When a hard copy is desired, this can be outputted
from the printer 750. Information about the location of
25 the identified document (such as physical address of the
optical disk unit) is read out from the file unit 420 to
be subsequently sent to the optical disk control unit 450
as the control command for reading the optical disk by

1 way of the bus adapter 805. The image information or data
thus read out is once stored in the buffer memory 350 and
is sequentically decoded through the IP 600 to be displayed.

The mouse 230 is capable of designating the
5 display position or location on both the CRTs 210 and 500.
Accordingly, the display position of the image on the CRT
500 is designated by the mouse 230. By taking advantage of
this function, the document images on plurality of pages
can also be displayed at given locations or positions on the
10 CRT in overlapping relation. Furthermore, the document
image corresponding to one page can be displayed in a
shrunked size through the IP 600, for thereby allowing a
number of pages to be simultaneously displayed on a single
CRT screen. Management of images to be displayed on the
15 CRT is performed by the control unit or CPU 100.

Input the edition of the world knowledge are
performed on the terminal 200 by displaying the document on
the CRT 500, as it is required. With the phrase "world
knowledge", it is intended to mean a set of the concepts
20 concerning the world or field described in the document
and the facts described in terms of relationships among
the concepts, which document is to be registered or has
already been registered. Further, the term "world
knowledge" encompasses the concepts as well as the inter-
25 conceptual relationships expressed in a natural language.
Needless to say, the document itself is included as one of
the concepts by the term "world". These knowledges are
stored in the file unit 430.

1 The three main functions described above can be
arbitrarily called in a modeless manner whenever they are
required. By way of example, information as required can
be displayed on the CRT 500 by resorting to the retrieval
5 function in the course of performing the additional edition
of the world knowledges. It is also possible to addi-
tionally file the knowledge of the contents of a document
in the course of performing the registration of the same
document.

10 Next, discussion will be directed to the
representation format of the world knowledge data. The
representation of knowledge is made in terms of two
varieties of elements, i.e. the concepts and the rela-
tion(s) between or among the concepts. Fig. 2 is a
15 schematic diagram illustrating conceptually these elements
in terms of a kind of a semantic network. In the figure,
each node represented by an ellipse represents a concept,
wherein the word written within the ellipse is typical one
representing that concept. This word is referred to as the
20 name of the concept. Links interconnecting the ellipses
(i.e. solid and broken lines with respective arrows)
represent the relationships among the concepts. For
example, the fact that a "supercomputer 1012" is "one
variety of" a "computer 1011" is represented by a link
25 labelled "IS-A". Hereat, it should be mentioned that
"UNIVERSAL 1010" is a specific concept defined to subsume
all the other concepts. In other words, all the concepts
constitute a concept tree having a root constituted by the

1 concept "UNIVERSAL", wherein the concept tree represents a
taxonomic hierarchy. The link "IS-A" is one variety of the
relationships. However, this link also serves as a route
for inheriting the property of a concept to the one ranked
5 lower. Consequently, this link or relationship is
considered discriminatively from the other relationships.
To this end, the links "IS-A" are represented by the arrowed
solid lines, while other links or relationships are
represented by broken lines.

10 By way of example, suppose a generic property that
"computer runs software". It will be noted that this
property can also be represented by the expression "soft-
ware runs on computer". This kind of relationship will
herein be referred to as the generic relationship. The
15 representing format of the generic relationship in the
case of the example mentioned above is

(COMPUTER RUNS SOFTWARE)

(SOFTWARE RUNS-ON COMPUTER) (5)

These generic relationships can be taken over to the low
20 rank concepts in such a manner that "supercomputer runs
software" and "X-computer runs software" or "operating
system runs on computer" and "UX runs on computer".
These relationships can be derived from the generic
relationship (5) and is not directly described in the
25 knowledge base.

In Fig. 2, the link 1005 interconnecting the
concepts "X-800" and "UX" differs from the aforementioned
generic relationship. This link 1005 represents the

- 1 individual relation defined between the two concepts
linked together. This sort of relation will be referred to
as the instance relation or simply as relation. It should
however be noted that the relation 1005 is an instance
5 relation of the generic relationship 1005.

In this way, the schematic diagram of Fig. 2
tells a fact that the subject matter of an article "ART #
018" denoted by a numeral 1018 is the supercomputer X-800
and that an operating system UX runs on the supercomputer
10 X-800. Further, it will be seen that all the concepts
are interconnected by longitudinal lines referred to as
the links labelled "IS-A" on one hand and interconnected
by transverse links referred to as the generic relationship
and the instance relations, to thereby constitutes the
15 conceptual network.

In this conjunction, it is important to note
that the property pertaining to a concept is not only
considered from the standpoint of that concept but also
equally considered in view of the concept that makes
20 appearance in the definition of the property itself. This
can be accomplished by adopting the idea "relation or
relationship" defined between the two concepts and by
giving a means to see the relation from both of these
concepts. By way of example, assuming that the article
25 "ART # 018" whose subject is "X-800" is registered. Then,
this means that the fact "X-800" is described in the article
ART # 018" is also registered.

The knowledge representation elucidated above can

1 be formally illustrated such as shown in Fig. 3. From the
figure, it will be seen that the system stores four types
of data in terms of the concept C , the subsumption rela-
tion S , the generic relationship R and the instance
5 relation \underline{r} for management. More specifically, $C(i)$
represents the i -th concept, $S(k, i)$ represents the fact
that a concept $C(K)$ is one variety of the concept $C(i)$,
 $R(m)$ represents the m -th generic relationship, and r
(m, k, ℓ) represents an instance relation of the generic
10 relationship $R(m)$ which is defined between the concepts
 $C(k)$ and $C(\ell)$.

More particularly, these four types of data can
be represented as an entity relation model in a tabular
form, as will be seen in Fig. 4. Referring to the figure,
15 the concept C and the generic relationship R are apprehended
to be the entity while the subsumption relation S and the
instance relation \underline{r} are understood to be the relations
interlinking the entities. The generic relationship
defines a class of the instance relations \underline{r} and is consider-
20 ed to be the entity. More concrete representations
are shown in Figs. 5 to 8 in the form of table.

More specifically, Fig. 5 shows a table which
lists up definitions of words representing the concepts.
Basically, the table is composed of a column containing
25 identification numbers $C\#$ assigned individually to the
concepts, a column containing concept names (words or nota-
tions) $CNAME$ expressing the concepts, and a column
containing indications as to whether the expressions are

1 primary or secondary ones. For example, the concept
identified by the number #58 is "computer" which is also
expressed in Japanese.

Fig. 6 shows a table defining the subsumption
5 relations. The table is composed of a column listing the
individual concept identification number C# and a column
containing the identification number each assigned to a
higher rank or superclass concept subsuming the corre-
sponding or associated concept C#. As a special case, the
10 superclass concept of the concept "UNIVERSAL" is defined
to be "UNIVERSAL".

Fig. 7 shows a table defining the generic
relationships R. The table contains a column listing the
numbers RS# identifying the generic relationships, a
15 column listing the relationship names RSNAME of the
generic relationships, a column listing readings LR which
correspond to the readings of the generic relationships from
left to right and a column listing readings RL which
correspond to the readings of the generic relationships from
20 right to left. In this conjunction, it is to be noted that
"reading from left to right" applies valid only in the
basic form in which two concepts interlinked by the associ-
ated generic relationship are juxtaposed side by side, the
basic form being defined by the instance relation r which
25 will be elucidated by referring to Fig. 8. By way of exam-
ple, in the table R shown in Fig. 7, the name column RSNAME
contains "SUBJECT" as the sixteenth generic relationship.
This means that the "SUBJECT" is used as the instance

1 relations:

IS-SUBJECT-OF

or

SUBJECT-IS

5 It should further be added that there are such generic relationships for which the same readings are defined to have different meanings or usages. By way of example, there exist in the table of Fig. 7 two same readings "HAS-PART-OF" which however apply to the different
10 generic relationships named "PART-WHOLE 1" and "PART-WHOLE 2". This means that the part-whole relationship for the different concepts is to be handled discriminatively. Suppose for example the relation of "PART-WHOLE 1" to concept "organization". Then, the relationship "PART-
15 WHOLE 1" can be used, for example, in the form:

("ABC Co., Ltd." HAS-PART-OF "XYZ factory") (6)

On the other hand, when the relationship "PART-WHOLE 2" is applied to the concept "DISTRICT", the following relation, for example, applies valid.

20 ("California state" HAS-PART-OF "LosAngeles") (7)

Fig. 8 shows a table containing the relations r defined between the concepts. In this table, both the generic relationships and the instance relations are entered. A column G/I serves to discriminates the
25 generic relationship and the instance relation, wherein G indicates the generic relationship with I indicating the instance relation.

In the table r shown in Fig. 8, the records

1 include the relation identifying number R#, the generic
relationship identifying number RS# indicative of the type
of the relationships, the left concept identification
number CL identifying the concept located on the left side
5 in the basic form, and the right concept identification
number CR identifying the concept located on the righthand
side in the basic form.

By way of example, the relation #4 is a generic
relationship ($G/I = G$) which is defined by the concept #58
10 ("computer") and the concept #64 ("software") and which has
meaning defined by the generic relationship #7. More
specifically, in the table r, the following two relations
in appearance

(computer RUNS software)
15 (software RUNS-ON computer) (8)
are represented by the single record. Similarly, the
relation #724 is an instance relation of the generic
relationship #7 and interlinks the concepts #1512 and
#1051 with each other. Namely, as will be seen in the
20 table C, relations mentioned below are represented.

(X-800 RUNS UX)
(UX RUNS-ON X-800) (9)

Four kinds of data (tables C, S, R and r)
described above are stored in the file 430 as the knowledge
25 base.

Next, a table D for defining document images will
be described with reference to Fig. 9. The table 9 includes
columns for the document identification number D#, concept

1 identification number C#, document size SIZE, compressing
code type CODE, image scanning density DENS, physical
address PHYSA on the optical disk and the number of record-
ing sectors LENG. In the case of the record illustrated in
5 Fig. 9, it will be seen that the document #98 concerns the
concept #313 (i.e. article ART #018, see Fig. 5), the
size is A4, the scanning is effected at the density of 16
lines/mm, the compressing code is the MH code, and that
the document is stored at 13 sectors following the address
10 "400207" inclusive, of the optical disk.

As will be apparent, it is possible to combine
all the concepts with respective document image. This
means that the concept "COMPUTER", for example, may be
accompanied with the illustrative image of "DOCUMENT",
15 if desired. Further, a single concept may be annexed with
a plurality of different documents.

The table D is stored for management in the file
420 shown in Fig. 1.

In the foregoing, description has been made on
20 the structure of the apparatus and the data representation
formats embodying the invention. In the following,
description will be directed to a software structure and
processing procedures. Fig. 10 illustrates the software
structure. In the first place, it should be mentioned
25 that the illustrated software is processed by the control
unit 100 (Fig. 1) and programs as required are stored in
the file 410 (Fig. 1).

Referring to Fig. 10, the software includes a

1 dialogue control module 2001, a search and concept matching
 module 2001, a query formula generation module 2003, a
 concept network editor 2004, a network traverse control
 module 2005, a table manipulation module 2006, and an
 5 image display control module 2010.

Description will first be made on the function of
 the table manipulation module 2006 which constitutes one of
 the basic components. In table manipulation module 2006
 serves for manipulation of data of the aforementioned
 10 various table formate at a level of high order as well as
 retrieval of the data. Main functions will be enumerated
 below. Parenthetically, it should be mentioned that the
 program is written in LISP language and that S-expression
 is adopted. Further, for facilitation of the description,
 15 variables and functions are represented by small letters
 while constants are represented by capital letters.

As a function for creating a new table, "create-
 table" function can be mentioned. As to the table R
 shown in Fig. 7, for example, the framework thereof can be
 20 newly defined by calling the above function as follows:

```
(create-table 'R
              '(RS # RSNAME LR RL))      (10)
```

wherein the first argument is the name of the table and
 the second argument represents the list (set) of the
 25 columns' names, while the quotation mark "!" means that
 the symbol following the mark is not a variable but a
 constant.

Next an "insert" function for adding the records

1 in the table will be mentioned. By way of example, in the
table R shown in Fig. 7, three records 7, 15 and 16 can be
added with the aid of the "insert" function as follows:

```
(insert 'R
5      '(RS# RSNAME LR RL)
      '((7 RUN RUNS RUNS-ON)
        (15 DEVELOPMENT
          HAS-DEVELOPED IS-DEVELOPED-BY)
        (16 SUBJECT
10      IS-SUBJECT-OF SUBJECT-IS)))      (11)
```

For updating the record, a function "update"
can be employed. By way of example, in the table R (Fig. 7),
the value of the record located on the column RSNAME where
the value of the column RS# is can be updated to " 'THEME"
15 by employing the function "update" as follows:

```
(update 'R
      'RSNAME
      "THEME
      '(eq (v RS#) 16))      (12)
```

20 On the other hand, deletion of the record is performed as
follows:

```
(delete 'R ' (eq (v RS#) 16))      (13)
```

The second argument is a conditional term as is the case
with the expression (12). Both the functions "update"
25 and "delete" have arbitrary predicate functions other
conditional term.

For selection of the record (i.e. retrieval of
the record), a function "select" is employed.

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```
1      (select '(LR RL)
          'R
          '(smatch '*SUBJ (v RSNAME)))      (14)
```

According to the above expression (14), the record located
5 at the column RSNAME of the table R which partially
coincides with a fragmental or partial character string
"*SUBJ" is selected. Thereafter, the values of the same
record which are located at the columns LR and RL are
returned to the list. In the above expression, "smatch"
10 is a predicate function employed for deciding whether the
record matching with the fragmental or partial character
string exists or not.

The main functions of the table manipulation
module 2006 have been described. Next, the network traverse
15 control module will be described together with methods of
implementing main functions.

As described hereinbefore in conjunction with
Fig. 2, the conceptual network is composed of the concept
nodes and links termed "relation". The system remembers
20 as a current node the concept constituting the key of the
subject which the user is interested in. The user in turn
is capable of browsing (traversing) in the network by
employing the functions mentioned below. In this connec-
tion, it should be mentioned that "browsing or traversing"
25 is equivalent to the displacement or movement of the current
node.

Now, main network traverse or browse functions
will be considered. As a procedure for moving the current

1 node, the name of the concept or a partial character string
thereof may be first entered. When it is found at this step
that a plurality of concepts which coincides with the
partial character string are present, a menu table is dis-
5 played so that the user can select one of the displayed
concepts, the result of which is transferred to the current
node. Fig. 11 shows a display of the menu of concepts
which coincides with the partial character string
"*DATABASE", wherein the seventh concept in the menu has
10 been selected. The mark "*" indicates that a string of
characters following the mark is the partial (incomplete)
character string. The above function can be realized by
selecting the concept in accordance with

```
(select '(C# CNAME)
```

15

```
'C
```

```
'(smatch str (v CNAME))) (15)
```

and calling separately the menu selecting function (select-
one a-list). In the above expression, "str" is variable
for character string entered at the terminal.

20

A second browse or traverse procedure is to
sequentially trace or follow the conceptual tree
(hierarchical tree) by resorting to the menu selection.
Fig. 12 shows a menu of concepts ranking immediately below
the uppermost concept UNIVERSAL with command "l".

25

Starting from the menu shown in Fig. 12, the hierarchical
tree can be followed downwardly by inputting the desired
concept numbers in the menus in a manner illustrated in
Fig. 13. More specifically, in the case of the example

The concept subsumed by a given concept C can be derived in a manner mentioned below. First, in accordance with

A third browse procedure can be carried out by displaying graphically the conceptual or hierarchical tree on the CRT. Fig. 14 shows a concept tree beginning with a concept "space" down to the second hierarchy. By designating a given node of the concept tree displayed on the CRT 210 by means of the mouse 230 shown in Fig. 10, the current node can be moved to the designated node or the portion of the concept tree immediately underlying the

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1 designated concept can be displayed. It should be pointed
out that information of the position or location on the CRT
210 designated by the mouse 230 is received by the dialogue
control module 2001. Since this module is destined to
5 control the graphic display, the module can memorize what
is displayed at which locations on the CRT. Accordingly,
in response to the input information of a location, the
control module 2001 can identify the concept being
displayed at that location on the CRT at the most recent
10 time point. Consequently, the dialogue control module 2001
inputs information of the cursor position and returns the
concept name to the network traverse module 2005.

The graphical browse or traverse function can be
realized not only by making use of the subsumption relations
15 of the concepts illustrated in Fig. 14 but also by resorting
to the part-whole relation. Fig. 15 shows a part of
hierarchies of the concept "earth" in another conceptual
tree configuration. The tree can be browsed, being
directed by the part-whole relation in the utterly same
20 manner as the case described above in conjunction with
Fig. 14. The "part" concept can be extracted in the manner
mentioned below. First, in accordance with

(select '(RS#)

'R

25 '(eq (v LR) 'HAS-PART-OF)) (17)

a set of the generic relationship identification numbers
RS# representing the part-whole relations are called from
the table R shown in Fig. 7. In the case of the example

1 illustrated in Fig. 7, "2223" is called and memorized
temporarily at a variable x.

Assuming now that the concept which has as a
part thereof a concept to be found out is represented by C,
5 the concept constituting the part of C is derived in
accordance with

(select '(CR)

'r

'(and (eq (v CL) C)

10 (member (v RS#)x))) (18)

where a small letter r is the name of the table shown in
Fig. 8.

In the case where "HAS-PART-OF" is located at the
column RL of the table R shown in Fig. 7, the concept
15 constituting a part of the concept C can be obtained by
implementing the expressions (17) and (18) with LR being
exchanged by "RL" in the similar manner.

A fourth browse procedure resides in a chain-like
traverse with the aid of frame representation. This
20 procedure will be described in detail in conjunction with an
example shown in Fig. 16. At first, a partial character
string "*sowa" representative of a part of a man's name is
inputted. Then, only "J.F. SOWA" is found out. The current
node is moved automatically to this concept. The frame for
25 this concept is displayed by a command fr for the frame
display (the operand "*" means that the frame for the cur-
rent node be displayed). From the frame displayed, it
is found that "J.F. SOWA" is male "MAN" and that he is

1 author of "PAPER # 0012" and "BOOK # 0007". In this
conjunction, when it is desired to know what is dealt with
"PAPER # 0012", a command "fr 2" is inputted, resulting
in that a frame for the second row of the frame being
5 displayed is subsequently displayed. In the case of the
example under consideration, the subsequent display tells
that "PAPER # 0012" is "TECHNICAL PAPER" written by
"J.F. SOWA" and contained in "IBM-RES & DEV-76-20" on
pages 336 to 357. In the case of the example, the current
10 node is moved from "J.F. SOWA" to "PAPER # 0012" and
hence to "IBM-RES & DEV-76-20" and finally to "IBM-CORP".

The frame display is performed in the manner
described above. Assuming now that the frame for the
concept C is to be displayed in accordance with

15 (select '(RS#CR)
'r
'(eq (v CL) C)) (19)

there can be obtained a set of pairs of a relation under
concept where C is located on the lefthand side in the
20 basic form and the concepts which are located on the
right hand side. Similarly, from

(select '(RS#CL)
'r
'(eq (v CR) C)) (20)

25 there can be obtained a set of pairs of a relation under
concept in which C is located on the righthand side.

Assuming that said x is y are the results of
procedures mentioned above, respectively,

1 (select '(LR)

'R

'(eq (v RS#) x_{1i})) (21)

(select '(RL)

5 'R

'(eq (v RS#) y_{1i})) (22)

return the names of instance relations, where x_i and y_i represent the i -th members of the set \underline{x} and \underline{y} , respectively, and x_{1i} represents the first element of the member x_i and y_{1i} represents the first element of the member y_i . The names of these instance relations correspond to a first column of the frame (Fig. 16). More specifically, when the individual rows of the frame are termed as slots, the names under consideration correspond to the names of the slots, respectively. The second column of the frame contain the slot values representing the second elements x_{2i} and y_{2i} of the pairs x_i and y_i , respectively. Accordingly, by combining the slot names and the slot values in pairs and displaying then in a tabular form, a display such as shown in Fig. 16 can be produced. Since the concept is internally coded in terms of the concept identification number, transformation of the concept number to the concept name must be carried out by consulting the table C (Fig. 5) before generation of the display.

In the case of the example mentioned above, shift is made to a succeeding frame by designating the row number (slot number). However, it is also possible to

1 indicate directly the concept to which shift is to be
made on the CRT by means of the mouse. Further, the frames
can be displayed in sequential superposition.

Next, the concept network editor 2004 shown in
5 Fig. 10 will be considered.

The concept network editor serves for maintenance
of the knowledge base by performing definition and addition
of novel concepts and/or relations, alternation and deletion
thereof.

10 Fig. 17 illustrates an example of dialogue or
interaction. First "man" is entered through the keyboard,
resulting in that the current node is moved to the concept
"MAN", which is followed by registration of a new
man "SUPERMAN". Through a command "crc", "MR. SUPERMAN"
15 can be registered at a run below "MAN". Namely,

(MR. SUPERMAN IS-A MAN) (23)

is registered.

Subsequently, the property of the newly registered concept
"MR. SUPERMAN" is defined and registered in the form of the
20 instance relation.

The system possesses knowledges in the generic
form such that "a man devises a novel thing", "a man has an
academic title" or "a man has a job of some sort". By
taking advantage of these knowledge as prompt, the system
25 can display the item to be inputted. By way of example,
inputting of "MR. SUPERMAN" can be prompted in the form:

MR. SUPERMAN HAS-TITLE-OF {ACADEMIC TITLE}

The parenthesized concept "ACADEMIC TITLE"

1 indicates the class of property (a concept in the case of
this example) to be inputted. The concept network
traverse function is valid at this time point. The current
node has been moved to the concept "ACADEMIC-TITLE" at
5 that time point. Consequently, given traverse function
can be employed in order to find out the property to be
inputted. In the case of the example shown in Fig. 17, the
concept name "phd" is directly inputted. However, it is
also possible to display the concepts of the rank lower than
10 the concept "ACADEMIC-TITLE" in the form of a menu (see
Fig. 13) or display the conceptual tree (Fig. 14) for
searching the desired concept. It should however be noted
that the searching and browsing are restricted to the range
of the lower rank concepts of "ACADEMIC TITLE". After the
15 current node has been moved to the concept expressing the
property to be inputted through the traverse function,
"OK" is inputted for preparation for the inputting of
succeeding property.

As will be appreciated from the above, only the
20 properties to be inputted can be selected to be newly
defined and registered in accordance with the prompts
displayed by the system.

As described hereinbefore, one of the character-
istic features of the invention resides in that the property
25 is understood in terms of the instance relation to thereby
allow both concepts to be equally dealt with. Accordingly,
in the case of the example illustrated in Fig. 17, the
facts

1 (PHD IS-GIVEN-TO MR. SUPERMAN)
 (AAAI HAS-MEMBER-OF MR. SUPERMAN)
 (JAPAN HAS-PEOPLE-OF MR. SUPERMAN)
 (HITACHI-LTD HAS-EMPLOYEE-OF MR. SUPERMAN)

5 can be defined simultaneously.

New registration of concept can be internally realized in a manner mentioned below. Assuming now that the maximum $C\#$ (Fig. 5) is represented by C_{\max} , the concept "MR. SUPERMAN" can be entered in the table C in
 10 accordance with

```
(insert 'C
      '(C# CNAME P/S)
      (list (add1 Cmax)
            'MR. SUPERMAN
15      'P))                                     (24)
```

where the function "add 1" serves for incrementing by one (+1).. ---In accordance with

```
(insert 'S
      '(C# S#)
20      (list (add1 Cmax)
              (get-c# 'M A N)))                (25)
```

the fact expressed by the formula (24) can be entered in the table S. The function "get-C" serves for deriving from the concept name the identification number of that
 25 concept.

Registration of the instance relation can be performed relative to the name relation (property) in the manner mentioned below.

```

1      (insert 'r
          (R# RS# CL CR G/I)
          (list (add1 r#max)
                rs
5          (get-c# 'MR. SUPERMAN)
          (get-c# 'PHD)
          'I))
                                           (26)

```

where "rs" is the identification number of the generic relationship "ACADEMIC-TITLE", and "r # max" represents the maximum R # in the table r at that time point.

Another function of the concept network editor is alteration and/or modification (correction) of the facts and concepts which have already been registered. More specifically modification or correction of the name of concept, modification (correction) of positions in the conceptual tree (modification of classification), modification (correction) of the instance relation and generic relationship can be performed.

Fig. 18 shows an example of modification of the conceptual tree in which the position of a concept "PSYCHOLOGY" is to be changed from a class "SOCIAL-SCIENCE" to a class "NATURAL-SCIENCE". This change can be realized in accordance with

```

      (update 'S
25          'S#
          (get-c# 'NATURAL-SCIENCE)
          (eq (v C#)
              (get-c# 'PSYCHOLOGY)))
                                           (27)

```


1 As described hereinbefore, in the concept network
editor, the network browsing function can be employed as
desired. Similarly, the network editor function itself can
be recursively employed. In reality there arises often
5 such situation in which another concept is required to
be newly entered in the course of registration of the
definition of a new concept. In the case of the example
illustrated in Fig. 17, when a concept "AAAI" to be
inputted has not yet been entered in the class "ACADEMIC-
10 ASSOCIATION", the instruction or command "crc" is newly
inputted at this time point to thereby allow the concept
"AIII" to be entered. Furthermore, the property of "AAAI"
may be registered at that time point under the instruction
"crr", if desired.

15 Moreover, there arises also such situation in
which in the course of registration of a new concept,
registration of false "fact" is found. In that case, the
function of modification and/or alteration can be executed
without delay. Due to such recursiveness, new knowledge
20 can be additionally entered with improved efficiency.

 Next, description will be made of the query
formula generation module 2003 and the search and concept
matching module 2002 shown in Fig. 10. These modules
constitutes a major portion for making possible semantic
25 content retrieval from fragmentary ambiguous information.
Before entering into description of the function, a
processing flow will be considered in conjunction with an
exemplary retrieval. It is assumed that "article concerning

1 a computer developed by a company residing in California
state which computer runs under UNIS" (28). CUNIX is a
registered trade mark of Bell Laboratory.

Referring to Fig. 10, the current node is moved
5 to the concept "ARTICLE" and an instruction g is inputted
to start the generation of search (retrieval) formula.
The system determines the generic relationships defined for
the concept "ARTICLE" inclusive of those inherited from the
superclass concept to display them in the frame format,
10 as shown in Fig. 19. More specifically, the frame
containing the generic knowledges "ARTICLE is -PART-OF
PUBLISHED MATERIAL", "ARTICLE is -IN-PAGES-OF SO AND SO",
"ARTICLE is -REFERRED-TO-FROM ARTICLE" and others is
displayed. Then, the user can add more concrete informa-
15 tion than the one being currently displayed, by designating
a corresponding slot with the identification number
assigned thereto. In the case of the example illustrated
in Fig. 19, the fifth slot is selected because the informa-
tion that the subject of the article is a computer is
20 known to the user. In response thereto, the system moves
the current node to the superclass concept (i.e. concept
of higher rank) of the item to be entered. In this case,
the current node is moved to the concept "UNIVERSAL". At
this time, the user may use the any given network traverse
25 function (refer to Fig. 10). In the case of the example
illustrated in Fig. 19, "computer" is directly inputted
to thereby move the current node to the concept "COMPUTER".
However, unless the user can recall the name of the concept

1 to be inputted (in this case, computer), it can be determin-
ed by inputting the incomplete character string displaying
the menu. In the case of the example under consideration,
since further information of the computer exists, the
5 instruction g is successively inputted in succession to the
inputting of "computer".

Fig. 20 shows a display content for the dialogue
or interaction. It will be seen that the generic relation-
ships concerning the concept "COMPUTER" are displayed in a
10 frame structure. Similarly to the preceding procedure, the
slot for the condition to be added (the fourth slot in
this case) is selected. Then, it is displayed that the
class of item to be inputted is "ORGANIZATION.WORKPLACE".
At this step, the selection from menu (refer to Fig. 13)
15 can be employed. In the case of the present example
however, "company" meaning "a certain company" is solely
inputted straightforwardly. Since there exists information
to be added for "company", the instruction g is succeedingly
inputted to continue the process of generating the
20 retrieval formula.

Fig. 21 illustrates a frame display of the generic
relationships for the concept "COMPANY". By selecting the
seventh slot, the condition that the company under search
is located in California. It should be noted that
25 "CALIFORNIA" is selected by inputting the incomplete
character string "CAL". The concepts ranked lower than the
concepts "SPACE", "PLACE" and "LOCATION" are shown in Fig.
14.

1 Completion of inputting the conditions is informed
to the system by inputting "ok". Fig. 22 illustrates a
case where conditions are again inputted in connection with
the concept "COMPUTER" upon completion of inputting the
5 conditions for "COMPANY". At this time, the thirteenth
slot is selected to thereby input the information that
"the same computer runs under the operating system UNIX".

When the procedures described above have been
completed, the retrieval condition given by the expression
10 (28) is replaced by the following formal expression:

(ARTICLE

(SUBJECT-IS

(COMPUTER

(RUNS-UNDER UNIX)

15 (IS-DEVELOPED-AT

(COMPANY

(IS-LOCATED-IN CALIFORNIA)))))) (29)

As will be seen from the above, automatic
generation of the retrieval formula is performed under
20 the guidance of the generic knowledges described in terms
of the generic relationships. Most of the generic
knowledges are inherited from the concept of upper rank.
By way of example, referring to Fig. 21, although "COMPANY
is-A ORGANIZATION.WORKPLACE", most of the slots (generic
25 relationships) in that frame are defined for the upper
concept "ORGANIZATION.WORKPLACE", the slot inherent to
the concept "COMPANY" is only the slot "PRODUCES MACHINERY.
DEVICES". In this way, when the generic relationships

1 representing the generic knowledges are expressed
literally more generically (i.e. with higher rank concepts),
the generic relationships can have greater significance.
In other words, they can be applied to a greater number of
5 the concepts of lower rank.

The generic relationship of a concept C can be
determined in the manner mentioned below. It is now
assumed that a set of the concepts ranking higher than the
concept C is represented by x. (The set can be determined
10 by following the link "IS-A" in the table S up to the
concept "UNIVERSAL".) In accordance with

(select ' (RS# CR)

'r

' (and (member (v CL) x)

15 (eq (v G/I) 'G))) (30)

the generic relationship in which the concept C is defined
on the lefthand side is extracted from those inherited to
the concept C. It will be understood that the generic
relationship in which the concept C is defined on the
20 righthand side can be obtained by replacing CL by CR in
the expression (30). As will be seen from the above
expression (30), what is obtained is a pair of RS# and
CL or CR. From RS#, the slot name of the frame can be
determined by consulting the table R. Assuming the
25 answer of the expression (30) is in the form of

{(Y₁₁, Y₂₁) ... (Y_{1i}, Y_{2i}) ... },

```

1      (select ' (LR)
          'R
          '(eq (v RS#) y1i))          (31)

```

Accordingly, the slot name corresponding to the i -th y
5 can be obtained. When C_1 is replaced by CR in the
expression (30), then LR is replaced by RL in the
expression (31) (refer to Fig. 7).

When the answer of the expression (31) is written
as $\{(z_1) \dots (z_i) \dots\}$, the pair (z_i, y_{2i}) consists of the
10 slot name and the concept identification number. In
accordance with

```

      (select ' (CNAME)
          'C
          '(and (eq (v C#) y2i)
15      (eq (v P/S) 'P)))          (32)

```

the concept name C_i is derived, resulting in that the pairs
 (z_i, C_i) represents the slot name and the slot value. By
displaying the list $\{(z_1, C_1) (z_2, C_2) \dots (z_i, C_i) \dots\}$ in the
tabular form, the frame of the generic relationships can be
20 obtained, as illustrated in Fig. 21.

When the search instruction is inputted for the
automatically generated retrieval condition formula (e.g.
expression 29), concept matching is performed relative to
the set of terminal concepts of the current node (i.e. the
25 concepts corresponding to the leaves of a concept subtree).
More specifically, each of the terminal concepts (the
most concrete concepts) is compared with "abstract concept"
expressed by the retrieval condition formula, resulting

1 in the terminal concept subsumed by the abstract concept.

Fig. 23 shows the search in accordance with the retrieval condition 3000 given by the expression (29).

It is possible to produce the frame display 3001 of the
5 concepts of an article meeting the condition and the display of a document image 3051. It should be noted that the concept frame of the symbol "ARTICLE # 0014" does not coincide with the retrieval condition (29) at all in appearance. Such situation will occur in the information
10 retrieval for the hitherto known data base. More specifically, since the most concrete information is stored in the hitherto known data base, there take place no coincidence at all when the retrieval condition is abstract. In contrast, according to the teachings of the present
15 invention, the gap between the concrete contents of the concept frame and the abstract expression of the retrieval condition is eliminated by inference based on the world knowledges.

Next, description will be made of a matching
20 method in which inference is resorted to for eliminating possible gap existing between the abstract concept and the concrete concept. This method or procedure is referred to as the concept matching. Fig. 29 illustrates a process of the concept matching between as abstract concept given
25 by the expression (29) and the concept "ARTICLE # 0014".

In the searching process, the terminal concepts "ARTICLE # 0001", ..., "ARTICLE # 0040" are, respectively, compared with the condition (29). However, for simplifica-

1 tion of description, only the terminal concept "ARTICLE #
0014" which succeeds in the matching will be considered.

First, (ARTICLE) and (ARTICLE # 0014) are
compared with each other. From the frame 3001,

5 (ARTICLE # 0014 IS-A NEWS.ARTICLE)

and further

(NEWS.ARTICLE IS-A ARTICLE)

Accordingly,

(ARTICLE # 0014 IS-A ARTICLE)

10 By narrowing the condition by one step, it is checked
whether

(ARTICLE (SUBJECT-IS COMPUTER)) (33)

is valid or not. From the frame 3001, it is seen that

(ARTICLE # 0014

15 (SUBJECT-IS HP-9000))

Accordingly, check may be made as to whether or not

(HP-9000 IS-A COMPUTER)

By following up the link 3003,

(HP-9000 IS-A SUPERCOMPUTER)

20 Further, when the link 3032 is followed up,

(SUPERCOMPUTER IS-A COMPUTER)

The above are apparent from the frames 3002 and 3004,
respectively. Thus, the formula (33) applies valid.

Accordingly, check is next made as to the validness of

25 (ARTICLE

(SUBJECT-IS

(COMPUTER (RUNS-UNDER UNIX)

(IS-DEVELOPED-AT

1 COMPANY))))) (34)

It can be seen directly from the frame 3002 that (COMPUTER RUNS-UNDER UNIX) applies valid. Concerning (COMPUTER IS-DEVELOPED-AT COMPANY), the frame 3002 states

5 (HP-9000 IS-DEVELOPED-AT
HP.HEWLETT-PACKARD-CO)

Following the link 3033, it is stated in the frame 3004 that
(HP.HEWLETT-PACKARD-CO IS-A COMPANY)

Accordingly, statement in the frame 3002 is true, which
10 means that the expression (34) applies valid.

Further narrowing the retrieval condition by one more step, comparison with the condition (29) is made. Since the frame 3004 states

(HP.HEWLETT-PACKARD-CO IS-LOCATED-IN PALO-ALTO) (35)

15 it is necessary to check whether or not

(COMPANY IS-LOCATED-IN CALIFORNIA) (36)

Following the link 3034, the frame 3005 states:

(PALO-ALTO IS-PART-OF CALIFORNIA) (37)

Accordingly, in combination with the expression (35), it is
20 inferred that

(HP.HEWLETT-PACKARD-CO IS-LOCATED-IN CALIFORNIA)

Thus, it is found that the abstract concept (29) subsumes the concrete concept "ARTICLE # 0014".

In the foregoing, the concept matching has been
25 elucidated in connection with a concrete example. Briefing the above procedure, it can be stated that the process for checking the presence of the subsumption relation between concepts and the process for checking the coincidence

1 between the individual slots are alternately and
recursively called for proceeding with the procedure.
Further, the procedure adopts the backward-changing
inference. Accordingly, the time taken for the searching
5 is basically proportional to the number of the concrete
items subjected to retrieval.

In the concept matching, the concrete concept is
returned as a value when the matching is successful. By
inserting this value in the abstract concept, it becomes
10 apparent ultimately why a certain concrete concept has
matched. According to the invention, an instruction "why"
is inputted, as the result of which the reason why the
matching was found is displayed and outputted. In the case
of the example given by the expression (29), there is
15 outputted

(ARTICLE # 0014

(SUBJECT-IS

(HP-9000

(RUNS-UNDER UNIX)

20 (IS-DEVELOPED-AT

(HP.HEWLETT-PACKARD-CO

(IS-LOCATED-IN PALO-ALTO)))))) (38)

Thus, it is found that the computer stated abstractly in
the course of retrieval is "HP-9000" and that a certain
25 company is "HP.HEWLETT-PACKARD-CO".

The present invention also provides means for
translating the knowledge expressed by the concept network
into tabular form familiar for the user and allowing the

1 retrieval on the table. An example of such means is illus-
trated in Fig. 25. After the current node has been moved
to an abstract concept "NEWS.ARTICLE", an instruction
"tab" is inputted. Then, the system generates internally
5 a concept frame of the terminal concept of the abstract
concept. Subsequently, the slot names appearing in the
concept frame are presented in the form of a table. In
the case of the example illustrated in Fig. 25, it is
assumed that six varieties of slots are present. The user
10 can select the slots which is to be transformed to
columns of the table. In the case of the illustrated
example, the sixth and fifth slots, i.e. "TITLE-IS" and
"SUBJECT-IS" are selected, whereby a table including
three columns in total is prepared. The user may search out
15 the desired item on the basis of sentences contained in the
column "TITLE-IS". The selected result is set as the
current node and an instruction for displaying the
document image is inputted. Then, the document image is
displayed on the CRT 500.

20 The retrieval system according to the present
invention can be applied not only to the document filing
but also to more general purpose such as retrieval of data
in general and information of facts or actual things.
Further, the concept matching which is capable of
25 automatically determining the subsumption relation between
two concept is also applicable as information analyzing
technique for examining whether the subsumption relation
exists between claims of patents. Moreover, cluster

1 analysis of concepts is possible by collecting an enormous
amount of concrete concepts and applying the inventive
concept matching. In the foregoing description of the
preferred embodiments of the invention, it has been
5 assumed that the system is destined for handling knowledges
and documents written in English. However, the invention
may be readily so embodied that knowledges and documents
stated in other languages can be equally processed
without departing from the spirit and scope of the inven-
10 tion. Those portions which depend on the language are
limited to the column "CNAME" of the table C shown in
Fig. 5 and the columns "RSNAME", "LR" and "RL" of the
table R shown in Fig. 7. Additionally, the system can be
so extended that multiple languages can be concurrently
15 handled. To this end, a column "LANG" is additionally
prepared for the table D and J may be recorded in this
column when the concerned language is Japanese and E
may be recorded when the language is English.

Although the concept registering function is based
20 on the system initiative interaction in which all the slot
names are sequentially presented to the user, as
illustrated in Fig. 17, it is possible to embody the inven-
tion in the user initiative system in which the generic
frame such as shown in Fig. 19 is displayed to allow the
25 user to input desired properties at his or her will. The
type of interaction is identical with the one adopted in the
retrieval formula generation and thus encompassed by the
invention.

1 As a development of the invention, the concept of
time can be introduced into the knowledge base. Usually,
there takes place frequently such situations in which the
time at or for which a fact is "true" is required to be
5 designated. By way of example, a fact "MR. SUPERMAN IS-
MEMBER-OF AAAI" is true from the time when SUPERMAN joined
AAAI to the time when he secedes therefrom. Such time
concept can be realized by correspondingly extending the
table r containing the instance relations.

10 Another extension of the system can be realized
in respect to the function for recording the sources of the
individual facts. By way of example, the sources of infor-
mation such as "who said so", "where it is written" and so
forth can be recorded in the table r by correspondingly
15 extending it. Further, an extent of reliability may be
added.

 The present invention is independent of the
configuration in which the system is realized. In order to
accomplish a high-speed processing, specific hardware may
20 be introduced. Further, when the knowledge base becomes
excessively large, variation in implementation such as
division of the tables for storing the concepts and
relations each into clusters can be made within the
coverage of the present invention. When the concepts and
25 others are to be expressed in Japanese, kana (Japanese
alphabet) - Chinese character translating function is
required. The system incorporating this function is also
covered by the present invention.

1 As will now be appreciated from the foregoing
description, it is possible according to the present
invention to derive easily any desired information such as
that of document starting from fragmentary information
5 without necessity to know the actual architecture of the
file or data base. Further, storage of information in
such manner that information may be easily read out can
be realized without any appreciable difficulty.

 In more concrete, the world knowledge about the
10 subjects to be filed are expressed in terms of the concept
network for realizing the knowledge base, whereby addition
of fresh knowledge, edition and dialogical inputting of
retrieval conditions can be performed in a much facilitated
manner. Although the knowledge is expressed in the forms
15 of generic relationship and instance relation, the system
is imparted with the capability of inferring and displaying,
upon inputting of information, what is next to be inputted
by the user and to what class the concept should belong on
the basis of the generic relationship. This capability or
20 function is architected on the basic principle.
Application to new worlds and/or more delicate worlds is
possible merely by addition or alteration of the knowledge
base expressed by the concept network.

 The system includes the concept network editor
25 for allowing addition and/or alteration of the knowledge
base. The editor is imparted with the function to
display the status of the knowledge base having four or
more network browsing functions in the form of the concept

1 tree, menu table, frame, or relation data base table. In
conjunction with such display, it is also possible to
browse from on to another different concepts in a sequential
manner. The possibility of such abundant data viewing is
5 due to adoption of the newly devised concept relation model.
In particular, the function of browsing to different
concepts while displaying the conceptual frame is well
compatible to man's thinking faculty or process. According-
ly, with this function alone, the highly intelligent concept
10 searching can be accomplished.

Further, owing to the inference based on the
world knowledge, meaningful content retrieval can be
accomplished starting from the fragmentary vague informa-
tion. Even from the abstract information which is useless
15 for the hitherto known system, semantically meaningful
contents can be derived, ensuring the retrieval with high
accuracy. Besides, since the retrieval condition can be
designated for any given items to any extent of detail, the
retrieval formula can be prepared so as to be compatible
20 with the level of user's memory or recalling faculty.

CLAIMS

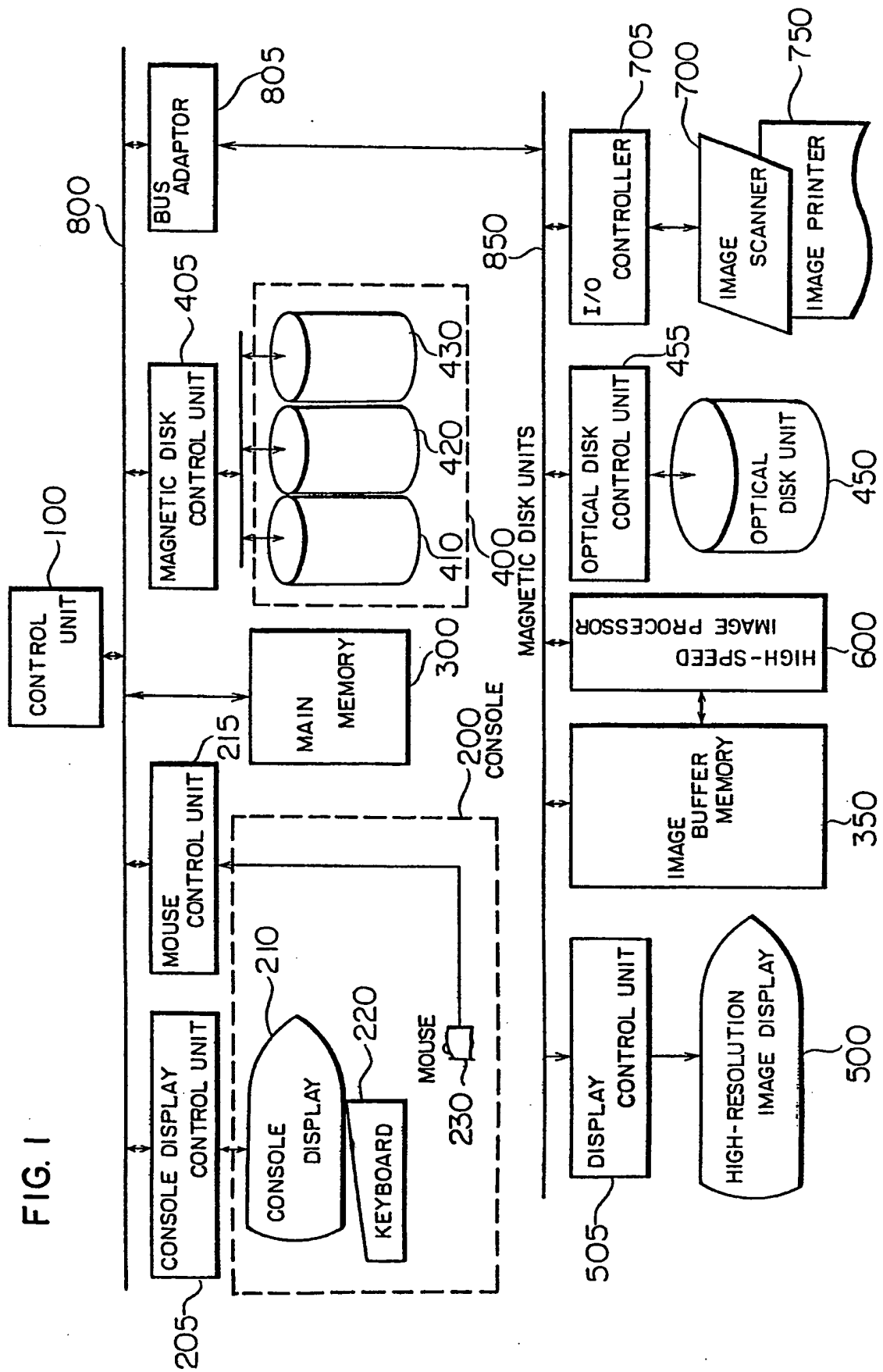
1. An information storage system which employs concept relation models expressing knowledges by concepts and relations defined between the concepts, comprising: first means for storing words expressing the concepts, respectively; second means for storing inter-concept subsumption relations for all the concepts; and third means for storing inter-concept relations except for said subsumption relations; and incorporating a first function for retrieving a certain concept from the words stored in said first means; a second function for selecting the more concrete concept by extracting with the aid of said second means a concept ranking lower than said concept retrieved through said first function; and a third function for searching a desired concept by extracting with the aid of said third means a concept related to the concept retrieved already.

2. An information storage system according to Claim 1, further including, fourth means for storing relations defined between the concepts, and fifth means for discriminating generic relationships and instance relations from each other in said concepts.

3. An information storage system according to Claim 2, wherein knowledge is expressed and managed in terms of a table managing names of the concepts, a table managing subsumption relations of the concepts, a table managing definitions of the generic relationships, and a table managing relations established between the concepts.

4. An information storage system according to Claim 2, wherein generation of abstract concept is based on a concept frame created by the generic relationships.
5. An information storage system according to Claim 1, further including means for generating abstract conceptual expressions in terms of combination of relations between the concepts.
6. An information storage system according to Claim 5, wherein generation of said abstract concept is based on a concept frame created by generic relationships.
7. An information storage system according to Claim 4, wherein information retrieval is realized by performing concept matching between all of the concrete concepts subjected to the retrieval and the abstract conceptual expression.

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FIG. 2

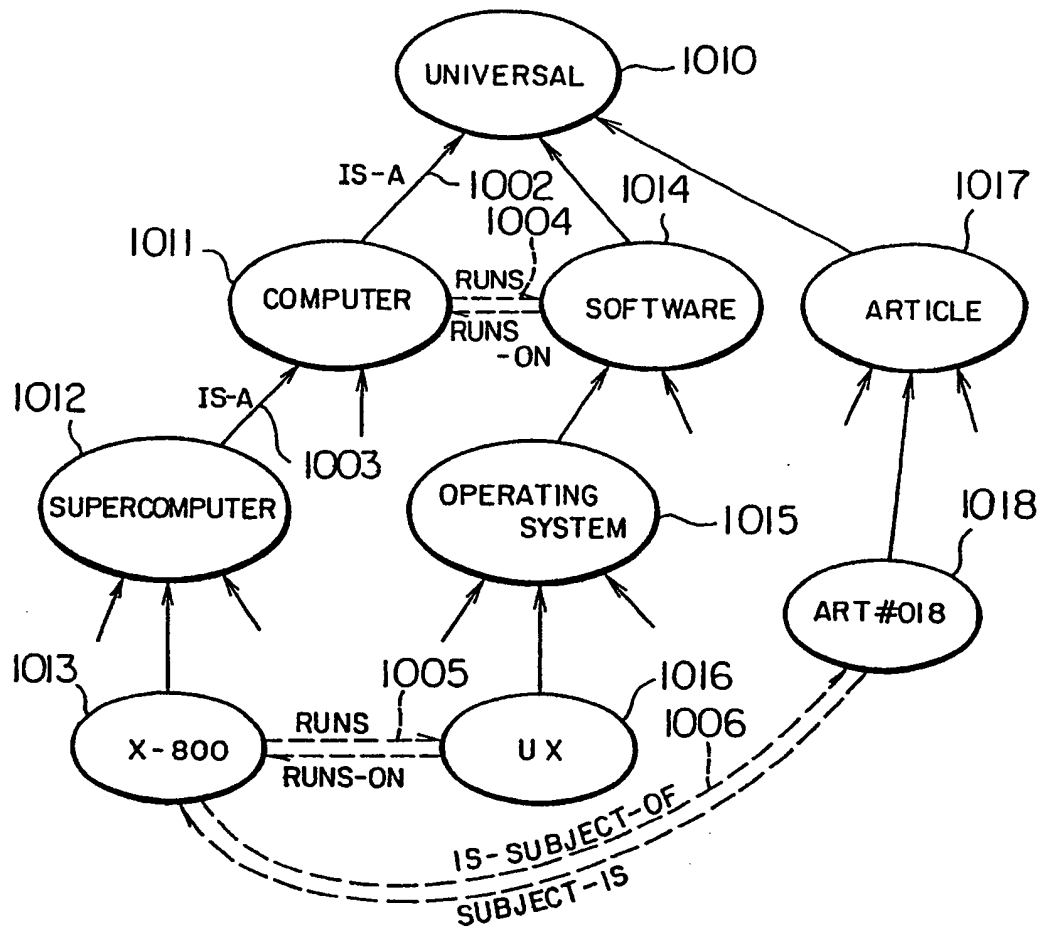
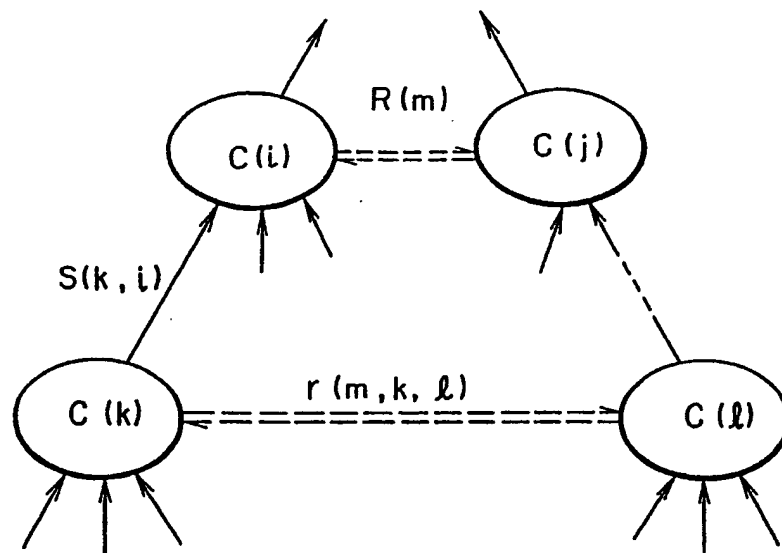
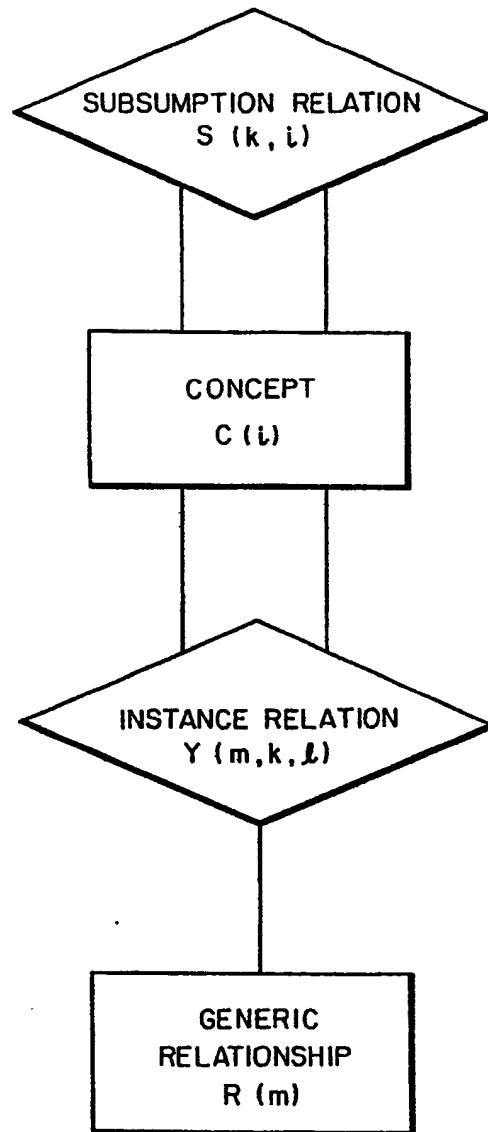


FIG. 3



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FIG. 4



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FIG. 5

C		
C #	CNAME	P/S
1	UNIVERSAL	P
⋮	⋮	⋮
58	COMPUTER	P
58	(計算機)	S
⋮	⋮	⋮
64	SOFTWARE	P
⋮	⋮	⋮
107	SUPERCOMPUTER	P
⋮	⋮	⋮
251	ARTICLE	P
⋮	⋮	⋮
313	ART #018	P
⋮	⋮	⋮
1051	UX	P
⋮	⋮	⋮
1419	OPERATING-SYSTEM	P
⋮	⋮	⋮
1512	X-800	
⋮	⋮	

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FIG. 6

S	
C #	S #
1	1
⋮	⋮
58	1
⋮	⋮
64	1
⋮	⋮
107	58
⋮	⋮
251	1
⋮	⋮
313	251
⋮	⋮
1051	1419
⋮	⋮
1419	64
⋮	⋮
1512	107
⋮	⋮

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FIG. 7

R			
RS #	RSNAME	LR	RL
⋮		⋮	
7	RUN	RUNS	RUNS-ON
⋮		⋮	
15	DEVELOPMENT	HAS-DEVELOPED	IS-DEVELOPED-BY
16	SUBJECT	IS-SUBJECT-OF	SUBJECT-IS
⋮		⋮	
21	AUTHORSHIP	HAS-WRITTEN	IS-WRITTEN-BY
22	PART-WHOLE 1	HAS-PART-OF	IS-PART-OF
23	PART-WHOLE 2	HAS-PART-OF	IS-PART-OF
24	PART WHOLE 3	IS-PART-OF	HAS-PART-OF
⋮			
34	LOCATION	IS-LOCATED-IN	IS-LOCATION-OF
⋮			

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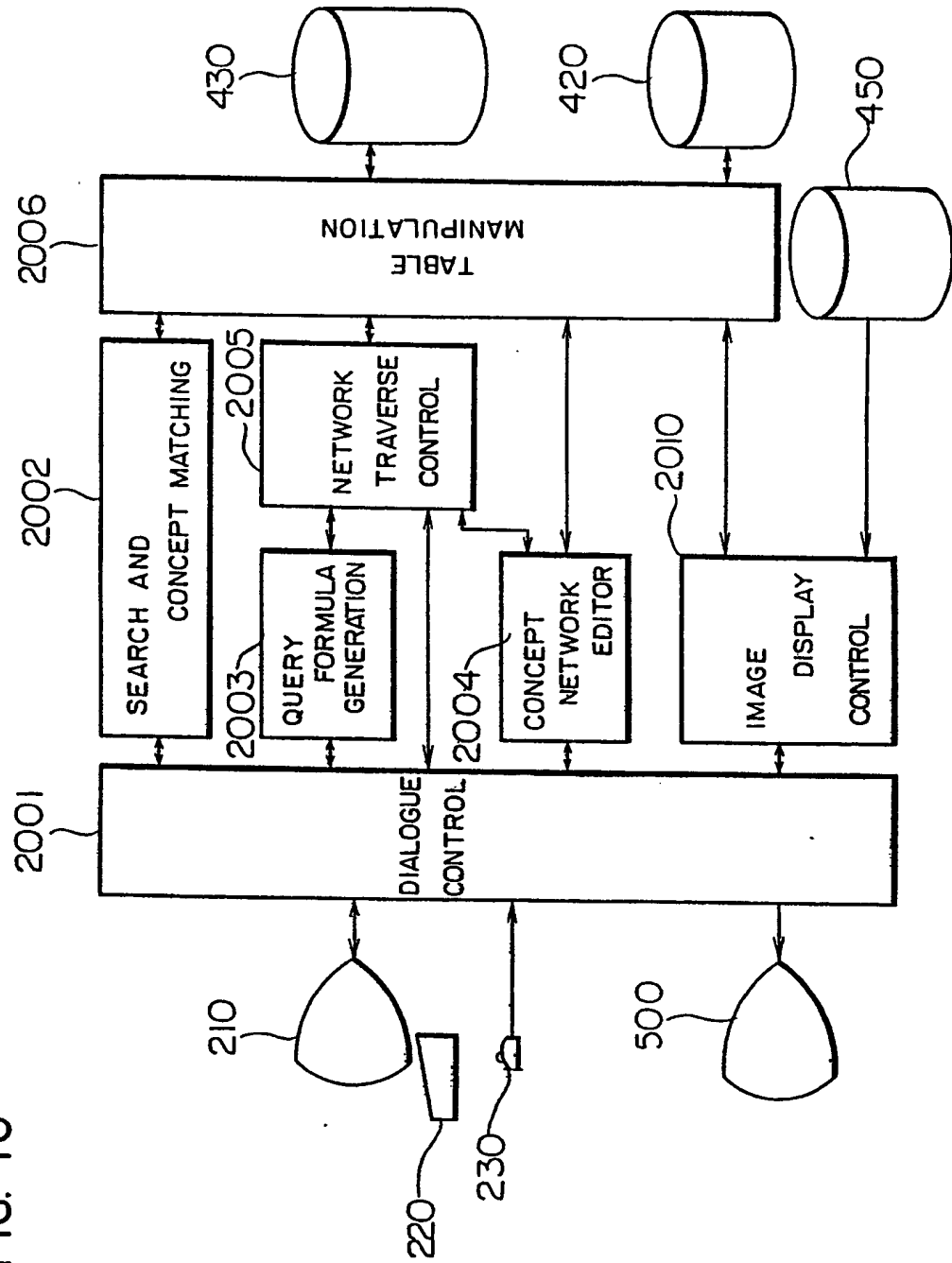
FIG. 8

r				
R #	RS #	CL	CR	G / I
⋮		⋮		
4	7	58	64	G
5	16	1	251	G
⋮		⋮		
724	7	1512	1051	I
⋮		⋮		
839	16	1512	313	I
⋮		⋮		

D #	C #	SIZE	CODE	DENS	PHYSA	LENG
:	:					:
:	:					:
98	313	A4	MH	16	400207	13
:	:					:
:	:					:

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FIG. 10



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FIG. 11

NO	* DATABASE
1	acm Trans. on Database Systems
2	ACM-DATABASE-SYSTEMS-5-4
3	ACM-DATABASE-SYSTEMS-9-2
4	Conceptual graphs for a database interface
5	Coreference in a frame database
6	DATABASE-INTERFACE
7	DATABASE-MODEL
8	DBMS. DATABASE-MANAGEMENT-SYSTEM
9	RABBIT: An Intelligent Database Assistant
10	RELATIONAL-DATABASE-MANAGER
11	RELATIONAL-DATABASE-SYSTEMS-INC

? NUMBER: 7

FIG. 12

BROWSE > 1

NO	UNIVERSAL
1	ABSTRACT-RELATIONS
2	AFFECTIONS
3	CONCEPT
4	EVENT
5	INTELLECT
6	MATTER
7	SCIENCE. TECHNOLOGY
8	SENSATION
9	UNIVERSAL
10	VOLITION

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FIG. 13

BROWSE>6

BROWSE>1

NO	MATTER
1	INORGANIC-MATTER
2	ORGANIC-MATTER

BROWSE > 1

BROWSE > 1

NO	INORGANIC-MATTER
1	HUMAN-CREATION
2	NATURAL-MATERIAL

BROWSE > 1

BROWSE > 1

NO	HUMAN-CREATION
1	MACHINERY. DEVICE
2	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE
3	PAPER-MATERIAL
4	SOFTWARE
5	SYSTEM. STRUCTURE

BROWSE > 2

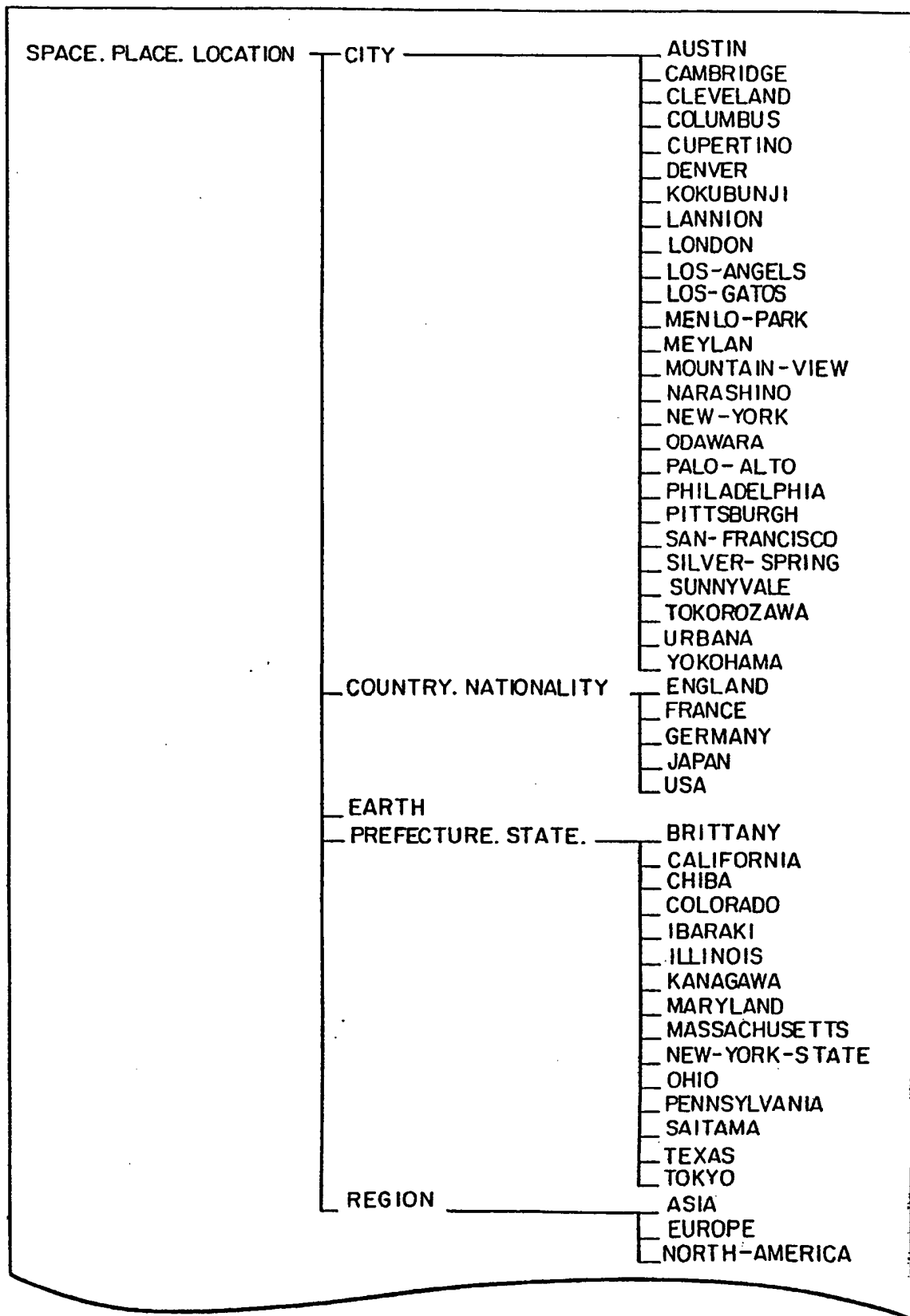
BROWSE > 1

NO	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE
1	ACADEMIC -ASSOCIATION
2	CENTER
3	COLLEGE. UNIVERSITY
4	COMPANY
5	GROUP
6	LIBRARY. BOOKROOM
7	OFFICE
8	RESEARCH-LAB
9	SCHOOL. DEPARTMENT
10	WORKS. FACTORY

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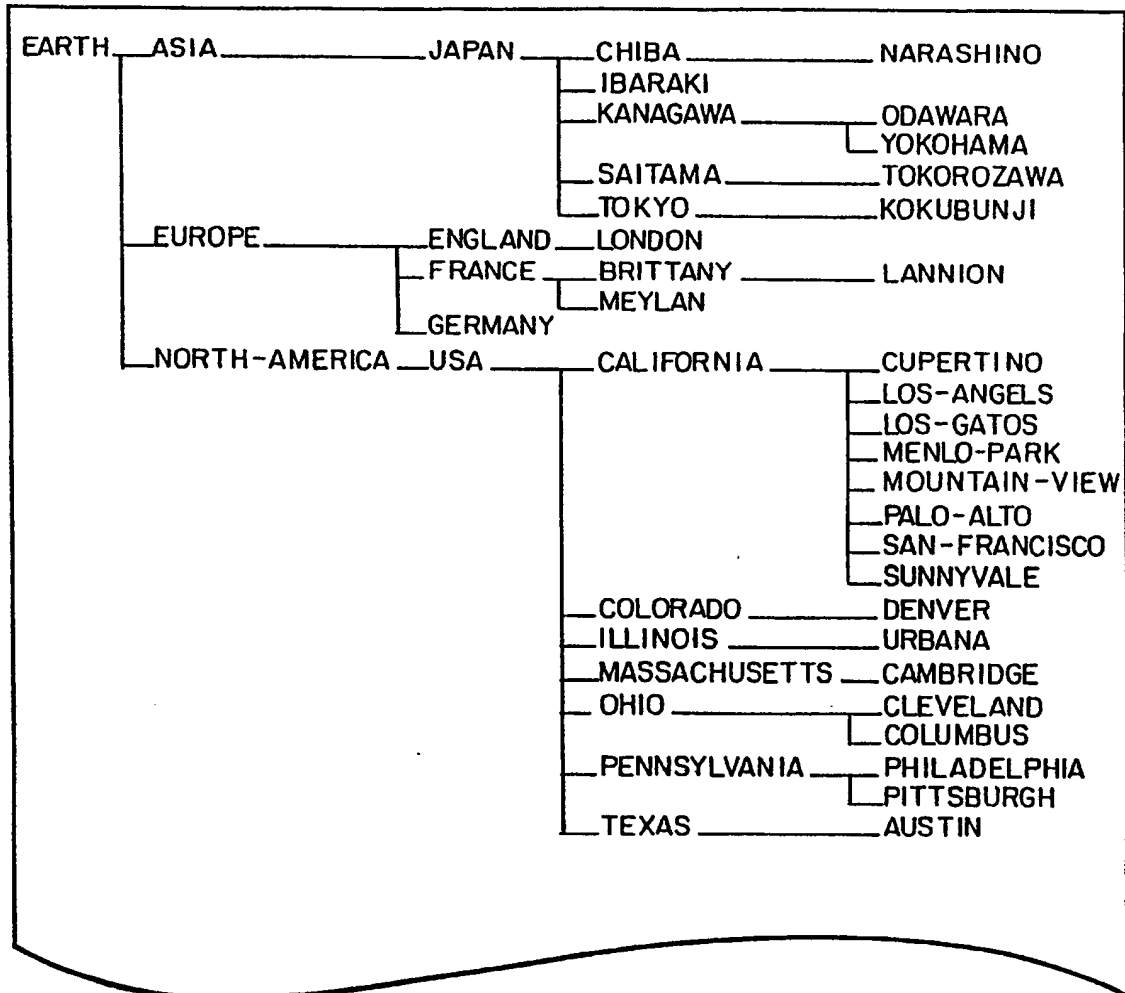
FIG. 14



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FIG. 15



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FIG. 16

BKOWSE> *sowa

BROWSE> fr *

J. F. SOWA.	CONCEPT	NO
IS - A	MAN	1
IS - AUTHOR - OF	PAPER # 0012	2
IS - AUTHOR - OF	BOOK # 0007	3
NATIONALITY - IS	USA	4
WORKS - AT	IBM Systems Research Institute	5

BROWSE > fr 2

PAPER # 0012	CONCEPT	NO
IS - A	TECH - PAPER	1
AUTHOR - IS	J. F. SOWA	2
IS - IN - PAGES - OF	336 - 357	3
IS - PART - OF	IBM - RES & DEV - 76 - 20	4
SUBJECT - IS	DATABASE - INTERFACE	5
TITLE - IS	Conceptual graphs for a database interface	6

BROWSE > fr 4

IBM - RES & DEV - 76 - 20	CONCEPT	NO
IS - A	IBM J. Research and Development	1
HAS - PART - OF	PAPER # 0012	2
IS - PUBLISHED - BY	IBM - CORP	3

BROWSE > fr 3

IBM - CORP	CONCEPT	NO
IS - A	COMPANY	1
HAS - ANNOUNCED	ARTICLE # 0011	2
HAS - DEVELOPED	SERIES - I - MINICOMPUTER	3
HAS - PART - OF	IBM Systems Research Institute	4
HAS - PART - OF	WORKS. FACTORY	5
IS - LOCATED - IN	USA	6
PRODUCES	CPIX	7
PRODUCES	SERIES - I - MINICOMPUTER	8
PUBLISHES	IBM J. Research and Development	9

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FIG. 17

BROWSE> man

MAN

BROWSE> crc mr. superman *

(MR. SUPERMAN (IS-A MAN))

% OK OR NO....OK

MR. SUPERMAN

BROWSE> crr *

MR. SUPERMAN HAS PROPOSED [INORGANIC-MATTER] : computer

MR. SUPERMAN HAS PROPOSED [COMPUTER] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN HAS TITLE OF [ACADEMIC-TITLE] : phd

MR. SUPERMAN HAS TITLE OF [PHD] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS A [JOB-POSITION] chief-researcher

MR. SUPERMAN IS A [CHIEF-RESEARCHER] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS A MEMBER OF [ACADEMIC-ASSOCIATION] : aaii

MR. SUPERMAN IS A MEMBER OF [AAAI] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS AUTHOR OF [ARTICLE] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS AUTHOR OF [PUBLISHED-MATERIAL] : BOOK

MR. SUPERMAN IS AUTHOR OF [BOOK] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS EDITOR OF [PUBLISHED-MATERIAL] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS PERSON TO CONTACT FOR [CONFERENCE] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS SUBJECT OF [PUBLISHED MATERIAL] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN IS SUBJECT OF [ARTICLE] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN WHOSE NATIONALITY IS [COUNTRY. NATIONALITY] : japan

MR. SUPERMAN WHOSE NATIONALITY IS [JAPAN] : OK

MR. SUPERMAN WORKS AT [ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE] : hitachi-ltd

MR. SUPERMAN WORKS AT [HITACHI-LTD] : OK

The followings are to be added to database.

((HAS-PROPOSED COMPUTER) (HAS TITLE OF PHD) (IS-A CHIEF-RESEARCHER)

(IS-A-MEMBER-OF AAAI) (IS-AUTHOR OF BOOK)

(NATIONALITY-OF-* IS JAPAN) (WORKS-AT HITACHI-LTD))

Do you want to add them? (y/n)y

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FIG. 18

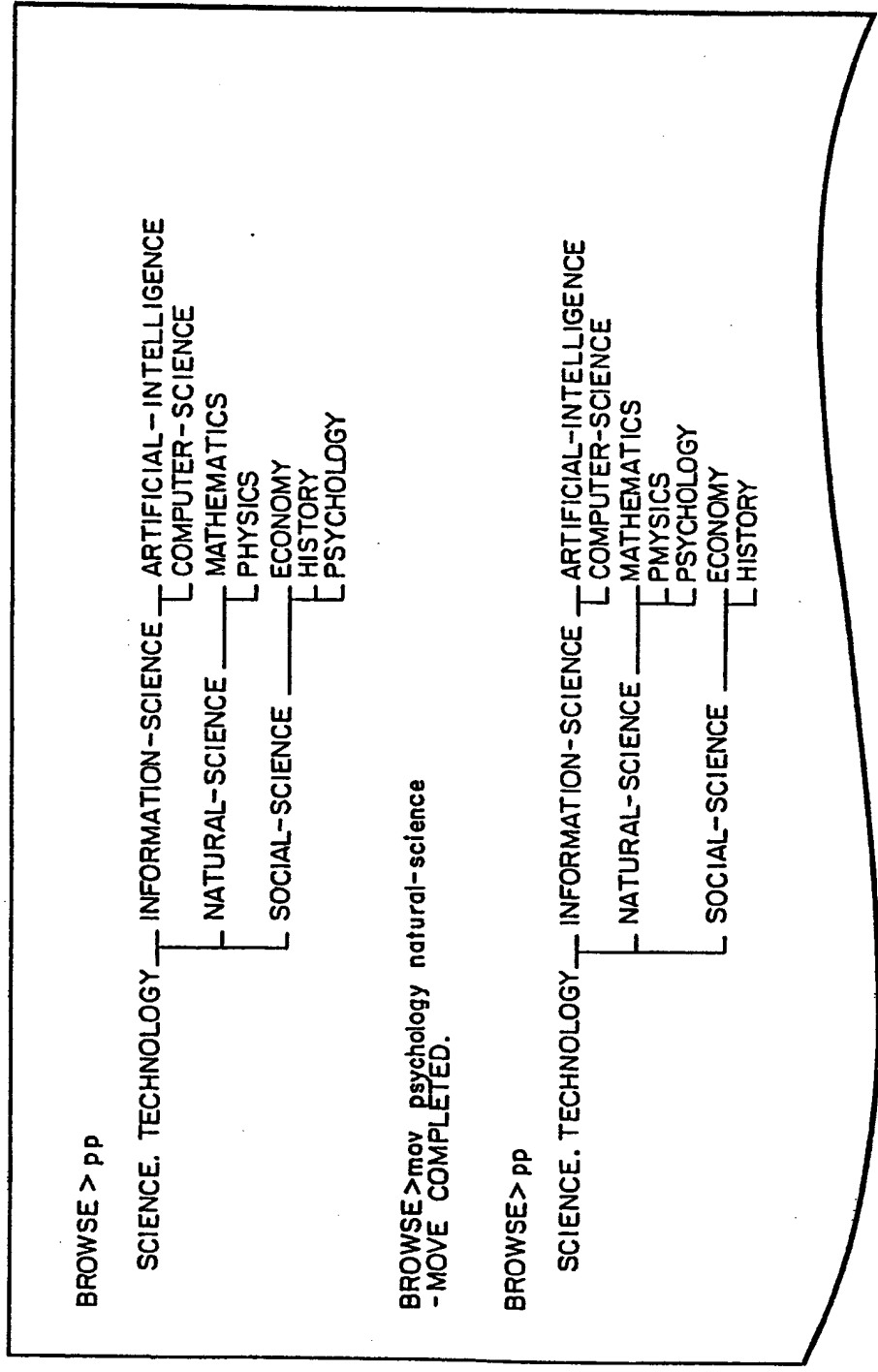


FIG. 19

BROWSE > article

BROWSE > q

- I'm thinking which questions to be asked
- Please add information you have.

ARTICLE	CONCEPT	NO
IS - IN - PAGES - OF	PAGE	1
IS - PART - OF	PUBLISHED - MATERIAL	2
IS - REFERRED - TO - FROM	ARTICLE	3
IS - REFERRED - TO - FROM	PUBLISHED - MATERIAL	4
SUBJECT - IS	UNIVERSAL	5
TITLE - IS	TITLE. HEADLINE	6

(ARTICLE)

?NUMBER : 5

ARTICLE WHOSE SUBJECT IS {UNIVERSAL} : computer

ARTICLE WHOSE SUBJECT IS {COMPUTER} : q

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FIG. 20

- I'm thinking which questions to be asked.
- Please add information you have.

COMPUTER	CONCEPT	NO
HAS-INTERFACE-OF	INTERFACE-DEVICE	1
HAS-PART-OF	MACHINERY. DEVICE	2
IS-ATTACHED-TO	COMPUTER	3
IS-DEVELOPED-AT	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE	4
IS-EQUIVALENT-TO	HUMAN-CREATION	5
IS-PRODUCED-BY	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE	6
IS-SUBJECT-OF	PUBLISHED-MATERIAL	7
IS-SUBJECT-OF	ARTICLE	8
IS-SUBJECT-OF	CONFERENCE	9
RESEMBLES	MATTER	10
RUNS	COMPUTER-SOFT	11
RUNS	PROGRAMMING-LANGUAGE	12
RUNS-UNDER	OS. OPERATING-SYSTEM	13

(COMPUTER)

?NUMBER : 4

COMPUTER IS DEVELOPED AT {ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE} : company

COMPUTER IS DEVELOPED AT {COMPANY} : q

FIG. 21

- I'm thinking which questions to be asked.
 — Please add information you have.

COMPANY	CONCEPT	NO
HAS-ANNOUNCED	NEWS. ARTICLE	1
HAS-DEVELOPED	MACHINERY. DEVICE	2
HAS-DEVELOPED	COMPUTER-SOFT	3
HAS-DEVELOPED	SYSTEM. STRUCTURE	4
HAS-EMPLOYEE-OF	PERSON	5
HAS-PART-OF	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE	6
IS-LOCATED-IN	SPACE. PLACE. LOCATION	7
IS-PART-OF	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE	8
PRODUCES	MACHINERY. DEVICE	9
PUBLISHES	PUBLISHED-MATERIAL	10

(COMPANY)

?NUMBER: 7

COMPANY IS LOCATED IN {SPACE PLACE. LOCATION} : * cal

COMPANY IS LOCATED IN {CALIFORNIA} : OK

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FIG. 22

COMPUTER	CONCEPT	NO
HAS-INTERFACE-OF	INTERFACE - DEVICE	1
HAS-PART-OF	MACHINERY. DEVICE	2
IS- ATTACHED- TO	COMPUTER	3
IS- DEVELOPED- AT	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE	4
IS- EQUIVALENT- TO	HUMAN- CREATION	5
IS- PRODUCED- BY	ORGANIZATION. WORKPLACE	6
IS- SUBJECT- OF	PUBLISHED- MATERIAL	7
IS- SUBJECT- OF	ARTICLE	8
IS- SUBJECT- OF	CONFERENCE	9
RESEMBLES	MATTER	10
RUNS	COMPUTER- SOFT	11
RUNS	PROGRAMMING- LANGUAGE	12
RUNS- UNDER	OS. OPERATING- SYSTEM	13

(COMPUTER (IS-DEVELOPED-AT (COMPANY (IS-LOCATED-IN CALIFORNIA))))
? NUMBER: 13
COMPUTER RUNS UNDER (OS OPERATING-SYSTEM): unix
COMPUTER RUNS UNDER {UNIX} :OK

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FIG. 23

ARTICLE ABOUT COMPUTER
WHICH RUNS UNDER UNIX,
WHICH IS DEVELOPED AT
A COMPANY IN CALIFORNIA

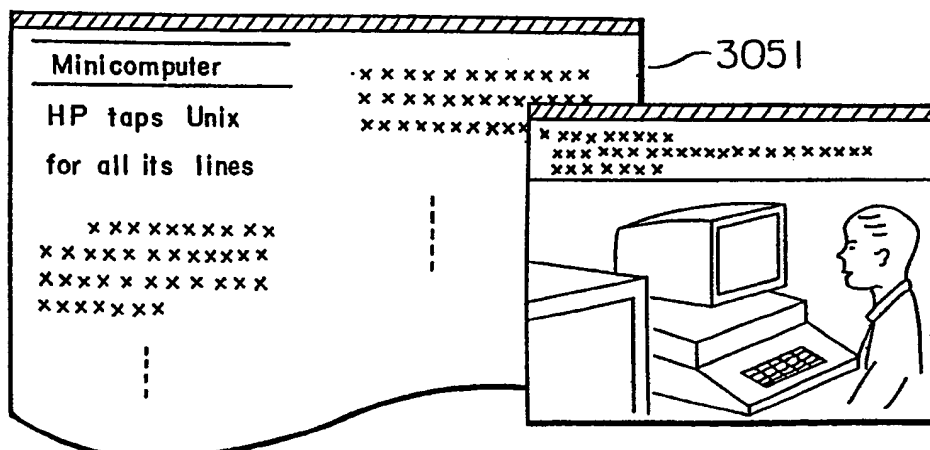


(ARTICLE
(SUBJECT-IS
(COMPUTER
(RUNS- UNDER UNIX)
(IS-DEVELOPED-AT (COMPANY (IS-LOCATED-IN CALIFORNIA))))))



-- I [ARTICLE]'S matched the query frame.

ARTICLE#0014	CONCEPT	NO
IS-A	NEWS. ARTICLE	1
IS-ANNOUNCED-BY	HP. HEWLETT - PACKARD - CO	2
IS-PART-OF	ELECTRONICS - 821130	3
SUBJECT-IS	HP-9000	4
SUBJECT-IS	32-PROCESSOR-CHIP-BY-HP	5
TITLE-IS	HP taps Unix for 211 its lines	6



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0 196 064

FIG. 24

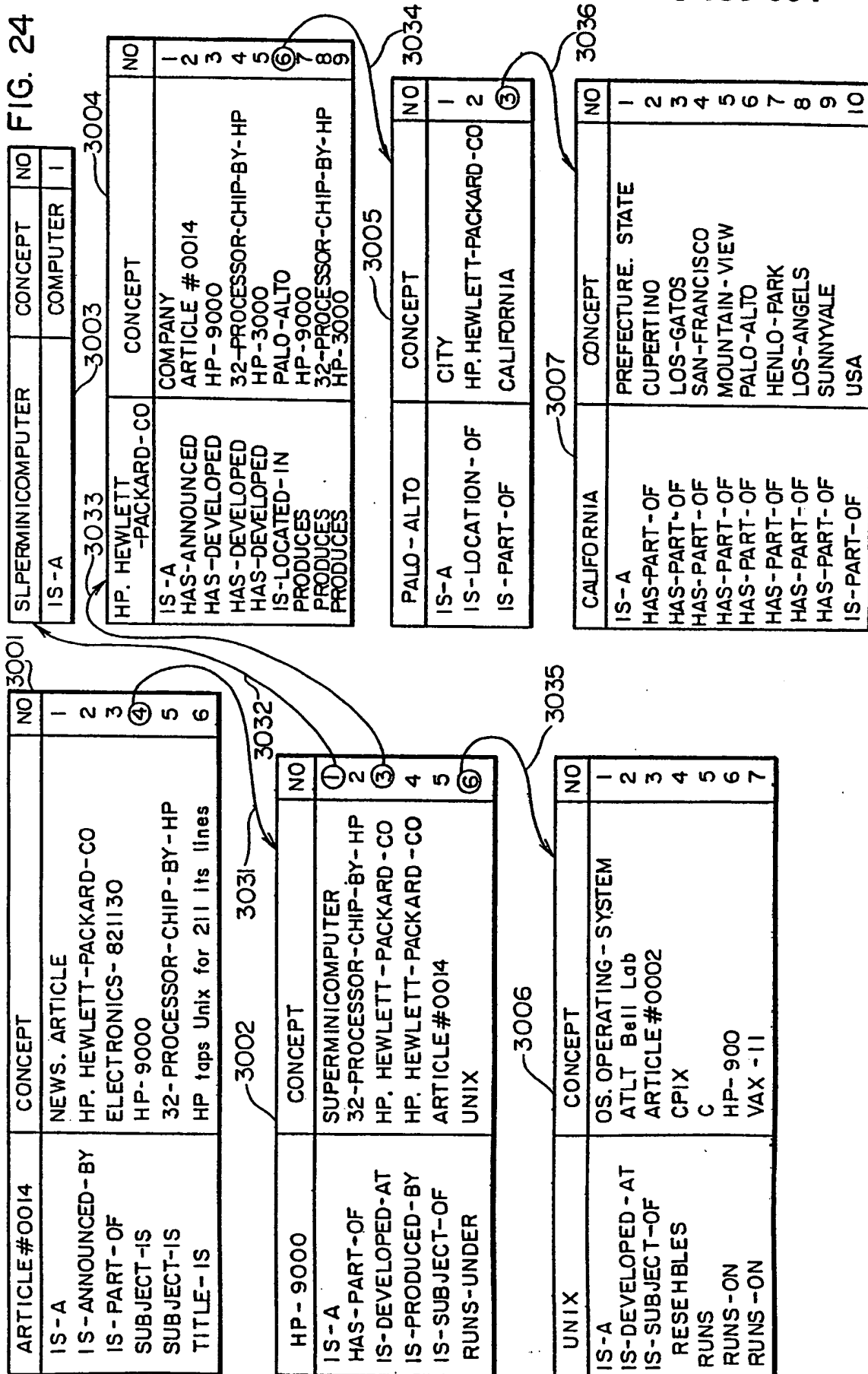


FIG. 25

NEWS. ARTICLE
BROWSE > tab *

NO	RELATIONSHIP
1	IS-ANNOUNCED-BY
2	IS-A
3	AUTHOR-IS
4	IS-PART-OF
5	SUBJECT-IS
6	TITLE-IS

NUMBERS > 6 5 0

NEWS. ARTICLE	TITLE-IS	SUBJECT-IS
ARTICLE# 0001	All-optical, bidirectional local network	OB-LAN-0001
ARTICLE# 1001	The coming surge in data-base systems	DBMS. DATABASE-MANAGEMENT-SYSTEM M
ARTICLE# 0002	Bell, DEC announce support for Unix	UNIX
ARTICLE# 0003	New Apples might compete head on	APPLE-LISA
ARTICLE# 0004	Desktop OCR reads six fonts	APPLE-MACINTOSH
ARTICLE# 0005	Ethernet data link controller is single chip	TO-5000
ARTICLE# 0006	Optical check reader speeds bank processing	THE-8001
ARTICLE# 0007	Graphic Station Can Stand Alone	SERIES-800
ARTICLE# 0008	S-100 peripheral card converts text input into	METAPHOR-WORK-STATION

F-B-E:0

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G06F 17/30

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(56) Documents Cited
EP 0638870 A1 EP 0583108 A2 US 4479196 A

(58) Field of Search
UK CL (Edition N) G4A AUSB
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ONLINE : WPI, INSPEC

(54) Database management system

(57) A database system which configures a storage model based on a conceptual data model in accordance with a hierarchical tree-like structure. This enables fast and comprehensive data extraction and querying functions. Every entity, every attribute and every entity occurrence is assigned a unique, multi-character expression. The expression has a predetermined hierarchical structure which defines the relationship between each entity, attribute and entity occurrence with every other entity, attribute and entity occurrence in the database and may also uniquely define an attribute value to an occurrence of an entity. The expressions are stored in an expression set table linking each element of each expression with a natural language phrase relating the expression to a hierarchical level and a position in a data model.

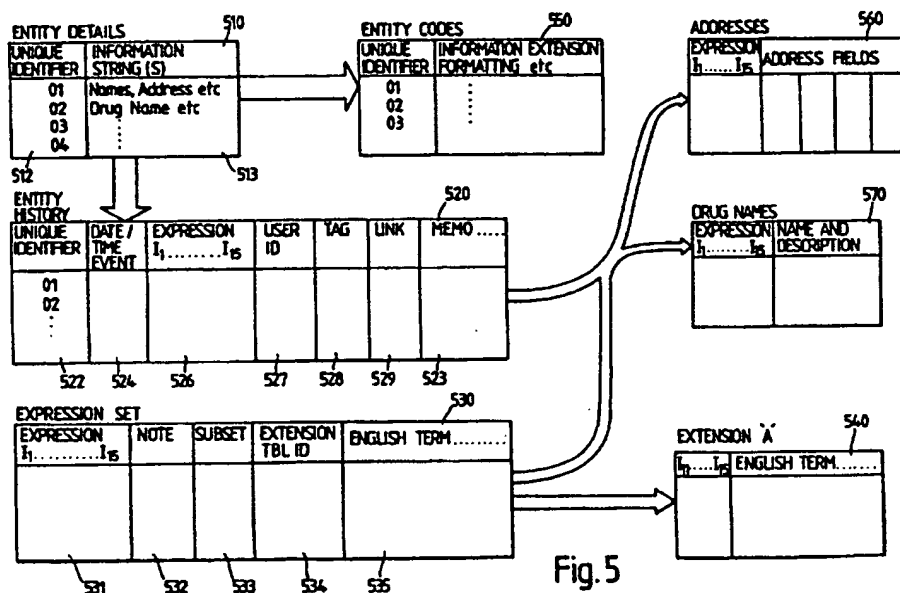
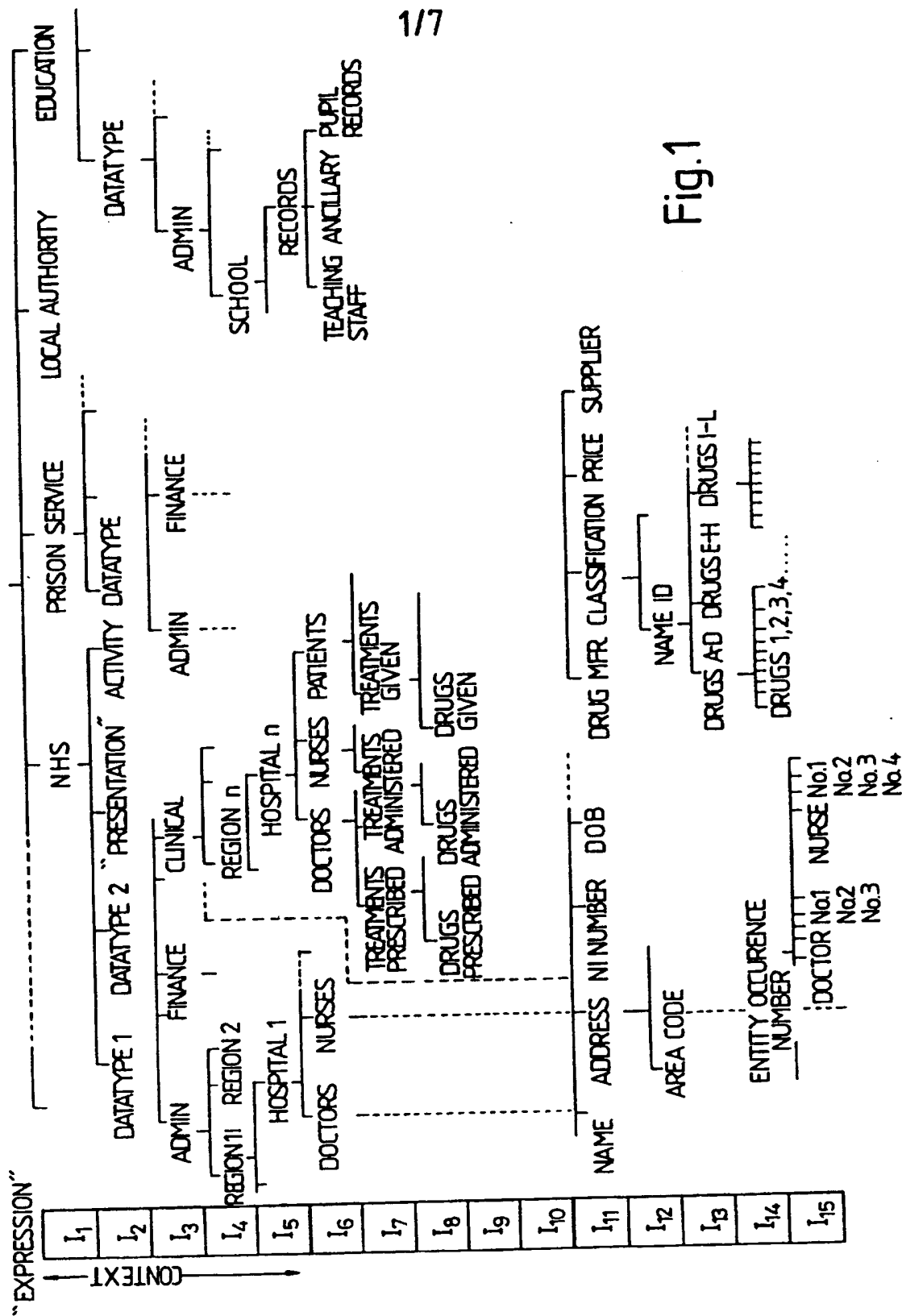


Fig.5



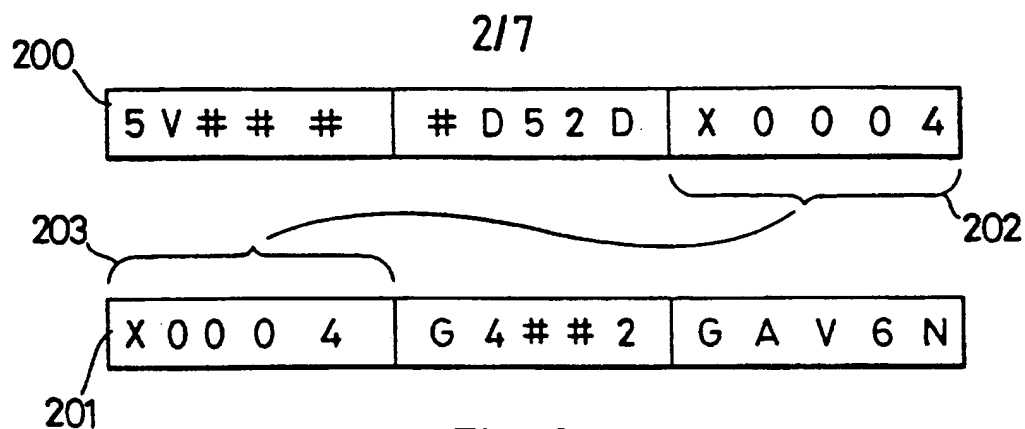


Fig. 2

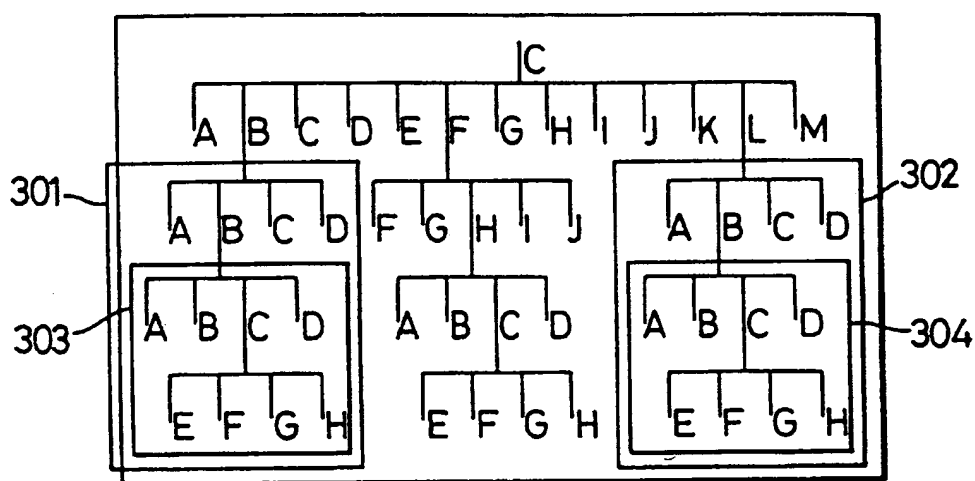


Fig. 3

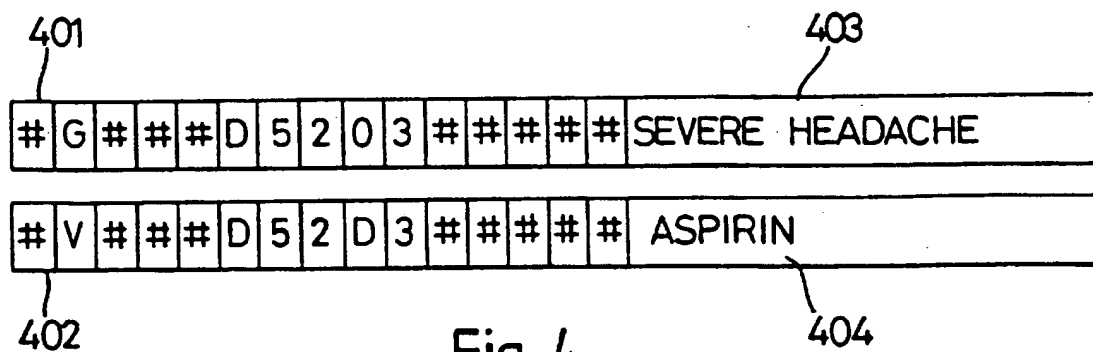


Fig. 4

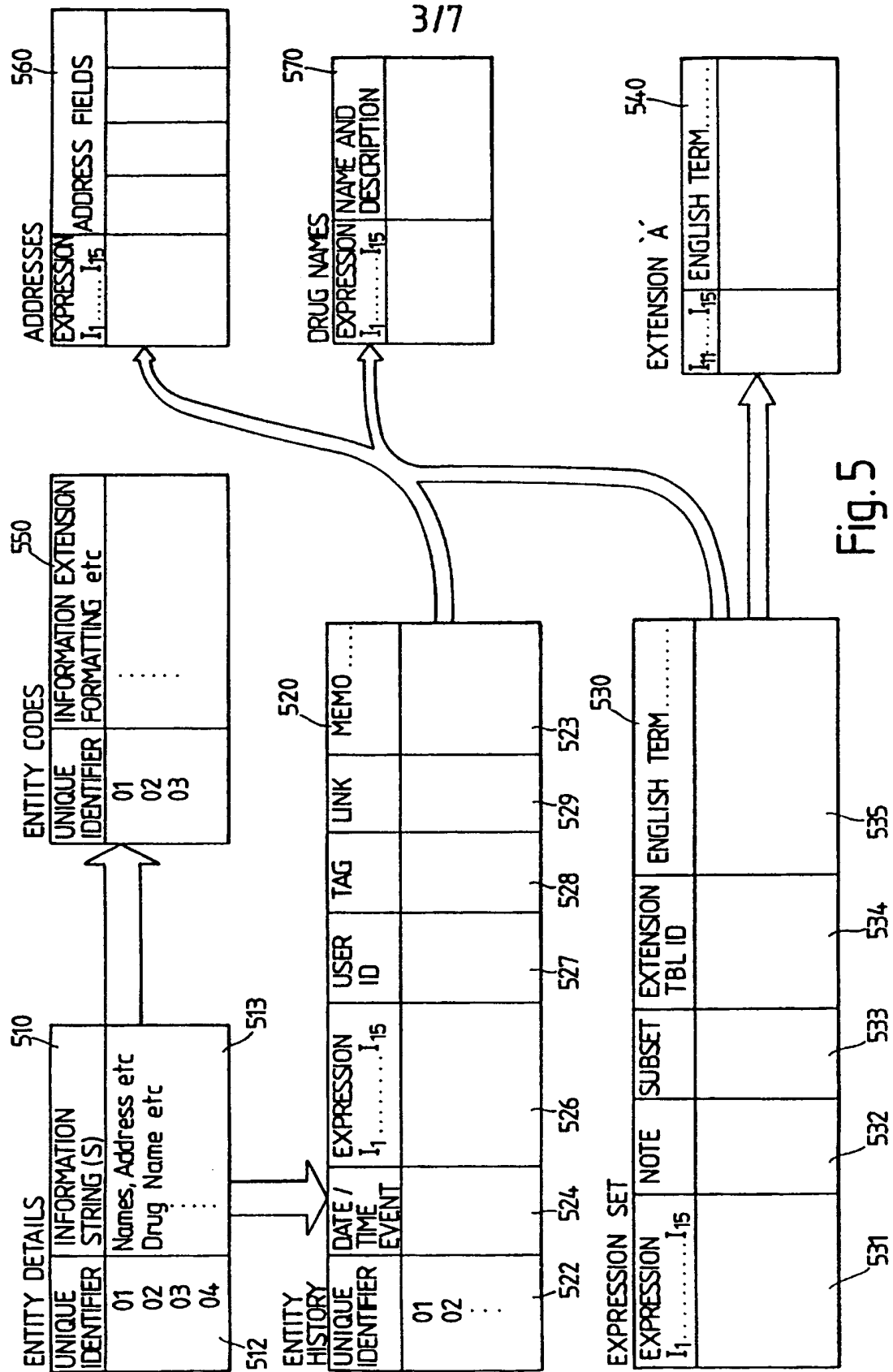


Fig. 5

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605

					English terms
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	
N					< >
N	1				Scalp
N	2				Face
N	2	1			Forehead
N	2	2			Right eye
N	2	3			Left eye
N	2	4			Nose
N	2	5			Right ear
N	2	6			Left eye
N	2	7			Mouth
N	2	8			Lips
N	2	9			Right cheek
N	2	A			Left cheek
N	2	B			Chin
N	3				Neck
N	3	1			Thyroid
N	3	2			Cervical spine
N	4				Back
N	4	1			Thoracic spine
N	4	2			Lumbar spine
N	4	3			Sacral area
N	4	4			Coccyx
N	4	5			Buttocks
N	5				Chest
N	5	1			Right side of chest
N	5	2			Left side of chest
N	5	3			Central chest area—frontal
N	5	4			Ribs
N	5	4	1		Right
N	5	4	2		Left
N	6				Abdomen
N	6	1			Upper abdomen
N	6	2			Lower abdomen
N	6	3			Right renal angle
N	6	4			Left renal angle
N	6	5			Umbilical area
N	6	6			Right hypochondrium
N	6	7			Left hypochondrium
N	6	8			Epigastrium
N	6	9			Right iliac fossa
N	6	A			Left iliac fossa
N	6	B			Right inguinal area
N	6	C			Left inguinal area
N	6	D			Pubic area
N	6	E			Genitalia
N	7	a			Left metacarpal joints
N	7	A			Right upper arm

Fig. 6b

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605

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	English term
M					< >
M	0				<0-45 degrees >
M	0	1			5 degrees
M	0	2			10 degrees
M	0	3			15 degrees
M	0	4			20 degrees
M	0	5			25 degrees
M	0	6			30 degrees
M	0	7			35 degrees
M	0	8			40 degrees
M	0	9			45 degrees
M	1				<50-90> degrees
M	1	A			50 degrees
M	1	B			55 degrees
M	1	C			60 degrees
M	1	D			65 degrees
M	1	E			70 degrees
M	1	F			75 degrees
M	1	G			80 degrees
M	1	H			85 degrees
M	1	I			90 degrees
M	2				<95-135 degrees >
M	2	1			95 degrees
M	2	2			100 degrees
M	2	3			105 degrees
M	2	4			110 degrees
M	2	5			115 degrees
M	2	6			120 degrees
M	2	7			125 degrees
M	2	8			130 degrees
M	2	9			135 degrees
M	3				<140-180 degrees >
M	3	a			140 degrees
M	3	b			145 degrees
M	3	c			150 degrees
M	3	d			155 degrees
M	3	e			160 degrees
M	3	f			165 degrees
M	3	g			170 degrees
M	3	h			175 degrees
M	3	i			180 degrees

Fig. 6c

